the PRIEST

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OUR SUNDAY VISITOR, Inc.

HUNTINGTON, INDIANA

the PRIEST

Vol. 1 FEBRUARY, 1945 No. 2

Editorial Comment

The Enemy Busy Sowing Cockle

THERE are comparatively few among the 38,000 priests in the United States who learn directly from the literature of the enemies of the Catholic Church just what they are saying or planning or actually doing at the present time. Such literature comes in abundance to the office from which *The Priest* goes out, because the weekly paper which it publishes for the laity reaches many thousands of non-Catholics, and even many thousands who have been active in organizations inimical to the Church.

Let us cite one or two big activities which are now current, and all designed to create a prejudice against the Mother Church and to hamper her work throughout the world. It may not be necessary to say much about the menace of Communism, since most priests are familiar with its varied activities through many fronts. From the data on file in our office we foretold as far back as eight years ago quite accurately the influence which the Communists would wield at this time. We were widely accused, of course, of seeing "red" when the color was only a faint "pink." Well the difference in viewpoint was explainable by the reliable data on which we based our judgment, and the lack of data in the hands of our critics. Today hundreds of people, recalling what we wrote eight years ago, are now telling us that we were right even then.

The Red Threat

On Thursday evening, January 11, the subject discussed by four debaters on the Town Meeting of the Air was "Is Communism a Threat to the American Way of Life?" Two of the participants in that discussion held that Communism is a serious threat, while the other two, without too much sympathy for it, argued that it was not a threat.

On Thursday evening, January

18, the result of a poll taken among the listening audience on the subject was revealed, and it disclosed that seventy-nine per cent of those who expressed their opinion believed that Communism *is* a serious threat. Only fifteen per cent believed that it is not, and six per cent of the people felt that they were unable to express a judgment.

The Communist "Party," with a small membership, would itself not be a threat, but the editors of magazines and papers of huge circulation, the influence exerted by Communist-minded leaders in the ranks of Labor, the high regard in which Marshall Stalin is held today, the tactics which Communists, as a minority group, are now following in the different conquered and invaded nations, certainly reveal very clearly that it can be a real threat to the American way of life.

But we have just said that we did not intend to say much about Communism itself.

Only a few days ago (January 21) there was held in Moscow, with the blessing of Marshall Stalin, a pan-Orthodox Council of Eastern Churches, the first to meet in more than a thousand years. It was attended by 300 Bishops, Archbishops and Metropolitans, and the chief purpose was to internationalize the Orthodox churches and to establish a center of unity to compete with Rome—and the international organization is to serve the cause of Soviet Russia.

Even now Soviet propaganda through many South American countries is being quietly spread through the Orthodox churches.

In the United States most of the 90,000 Russian Orthodox communicants broke away from the central government in Moscow because "it was dominated by the Soviet Government." But Metropolitan Theophilus sent three unofficial delegates to the Moscow Conference and, because the Orthodox Church has not fared well in the United States in recent years, it is likely that a reconciliation will be effected.

Arouse Anti-Catholics

Beginning on November 29, 1944 and ending on January 17, 1945, the *Christian Century* carried eight articles by Harold E. Fey, its field editor, in some of which articles the Catholic reader might discover feeble compliments paid to his religion, but the whole purpose of the series is to arouse non-Catholic Americans to be alert lest the Catholic Church will completely control our country, its institutions, its culture.

The Catholic Hierarchy of the United States is represented as working as a unit, according to a very carefully planned program, to "make America Catholic," to influence legislation both in Congress and in the different states, to control the press, as it is alleged to be in control of the movies, to prevent Protestant

missionaries from entering Catholic countries, to see that Catholic motion pictures are produced in large numbers, to get support from the USO for the establishment and maintenance of new churches, to secure diplomatic relations between the United States and the Vatican, to place Catholic social workers everywhere, to multiply Catholic hospitals, to introduce its literature into every home, to organize Labor with Catholics on top, to invade rural America as never before, to prevent the State Department from taking action against General Franco, etc., ect., and ultimately, through the National Council of Catholic Men, the National Council of Catholic Women, and the National Youth Council, to build towards a Catholic State Church.

Most of these charges, most Catholics will agree, are "fantastic," but they will not be so regarded by millions of uninformed non-Catholics, particularly if the charges be re-told in the sectarian press, and publicized from thousands of Protestant pulpits.

Of Mr. Fey, the writer of the articles in the *Christian Century*, the editor says: "During the past two years he has read extensively in the current literature of American Catholicism. All of the data presented in these articles come from Catholic sources."

The gentleman shows that he has read many pamphlets issued by the National Catholic Welfare Conference, but his interpretation of the same, and particularly of the motives, is, for the most part, very wrong.

The eight articles have been gathered together and published under the caption "Can Catholicism Win America?" and are offered for sale at twenty-five cents per copy; and in lots of one hundred at ten cents per copy. They are published by the Christian Century, 407 S. Dearborn Street, Chicago 5, Illinois. Believing that many of our priest readers will like to see the picture which Harold E. Fey draws of the Catholic Hierarchy in the United States, and that they might enjoy preparing an analysis of the articles themselves, we furnish the above address.

They Are Effective

That the articles are already having their effect on the minds of Protestant clergymen may be seen in the following paragraphs taken from the Dallas (Texas) *Morning News*, date of January 15:

" 'The Roman Catholic Hierarchy is engaged in a deliberate attempt to take away from the Protestant churches of America the leadership in religious life which they have maintained since the founding of the nation and are seeking ultimately to take the leadership in the political life of the country,' Dr. Roy Ewing Vale, Indianapolis,

Indiana, declared in Dallas Sunday.

"Dr. Vale as moderator of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., is spokesman for a following of more than 4,000,000 people in the United States. He holds the highest office which his church offers.

" 'The Roman Catholic Hierarchy has gone so far as to demand that we withdraw our missionaries from South America, advancing as their reason statements that Protestant missionaries interfere with the amicable relationships of the two continents,' Dr. Vale declared.

" 'The institutions of liberty and democracy were set up on the North American Continent under the canopy of the Protestant churches,' said Dr. Vale, 'and we do not intend to sit idly by and see our work destroyed.'

"Long an advocate of Protestant union, Dr. Vale said that Protestants should cooperate to present a unified impact on American thought and decision.

" 'Our churches need to join in a great harmony to squelch this controversy that has been brought into the religious life of America at a time when there is the severest demand for unity.' "

If the Catholic laity were only thirty per cent as well organized and as efficient as our enemies believe them to be, they would long since have exerted a far greater religious and moral influence on non-Catholic America than they have. Being concentrated, in great strength, in our large cities, having a common faith, being dedicated to God as His children and to Christ as

THE PRIEST **FEBRUARY, 1945** **VOL. 1, NO. 2**

"Take heed to thyself and to thy teaching, be earnest in them. For in so doing, thou wilt save both thyself and those who hear thee."
First Epistle of St Paul to Timothy (iv, 16)

THE PRIEST is published monthly by Our Sunday Visitor, Inc., at Huntington, Indiana. Printed in U. S. A. Entered as second-class matter December 20, 1944, at the Post Office at Huntington, Indiana, under the act of March 3, 1879.

Subscription Prices:

To members of Catholic clergy, and religious, $2.00 per year, $5.00 for three years. To seminarians, $1.00 per year. Canadian and Foreign, $3.00 per year, in U. S. Funds.

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Address manuscripts and editorial communications to the Reverend Editor at Old St. Mary's Seminary, 600 North Paca St., Baltimore (1), Md.

His soldiers, they could, if each proved to all his acquaintances that one can live "soberly and justly and godly" in this world and be made truly happy by so living, convert most men of good will.

Let us stimulate our people to do willingly and as a service to Christ what our fellow countrymen, who do not understand us, falsely believe that they are *compelled* to do at the direction of a political-minded Hierarchy.

Let us try to know more about what our enemies are doing than they know about what we are doing. No one can successfully engage in controversy who does not know the position of his opponent nearly as well as his own.

✠ J.F.N.

N. B. Beginning on February 4, **Our Sunday Visitor** will carry a series of nine articles dealing with Mr. Fey's comments. These articles will not be controversial, but will clarify matters on which Fey makes unwarranted observations and conclusions. These articles should be brought to the attention of your people. (Ed.)

Currente Calamo

Odds and ends from the editors' desks

WHAT would a magazine do without a little cubby-hole or catch-all for the odds and ends we want to put somewhere and can't put elsewhere? *Currente Calamo* has been devised by the editors to answer their needs in this regard. It may speak for any or all of them.

During the holidays we picked up the interesting fact that the venerable friar on duty at St. John's Church across from Penn Station is none other than Father Benno, Superior of all the Capuchins in North and South America. Father Bonaventure, whom we were visiting and who, incidentally, provides a very timely article in this issue was our informant. Father Benno is most devoted to his self-imposed task—a good example of the servus servorum tradition, eh?

Leaving the rectory in the pouring rain and being without an umbrella, we popped into that cafeteria on the corner as much to dry off as to have a cup of coffee, and whom should we meet but Father Harold Purcell, the founder of *The Sign*.

Father told us that he has founded the first inter-racial community of cloistered nuns in the country. They are Domini-

cans—four professed white and two Negro postulants. His community is now located at Marbury, Alabama. A good example of inter-racial justice.

Father Purcell is not in good health. He was in New York for a consultation with specialists. He was also trying to scout up money for his nuns. The location at Marbury is only temporary. Eventually, he wants to build a permanent convent for his community in his City of St. Jude, Montgomery, Alabama. If any of our readers can spare a five dollar bill, they can be sure it will be put to good use. It certainly won't be spent on Father Harold Purcell. We can vouch for that.

When we asked him about the address—City of St. Jude, Montgomery, Alabama—how it sounded a little like a city within a city, he reminded us of Radio City, New York, N. Y. His City of St. Jude is a 60-acre tract—at least as much in area as Radio City. It sounded like a logical parallel. More about this anon—we hope.

While in that neighborhood, we dropped into the Guild Bookshop, behind St. Francis' Church. It is a well managed affair, spacious, and spotlessly clean. (Our cigarette embarrassed us. There isn't an ashtray in the place. But then we shouldn't have been smoking . . .) Naturally, the Bookshop gives special prominence to the publications of St. Anthony's Guild in Paterson.

Father John Forest, O.F.M., deserves a hand for the eclat with which he does his work. Every item in his catalogue is printed on good paper and in an attractive style. Father John is said to be one of the keenest businessmen in the game. Few know that he is enthusiastic over aviation, that he can pilot a plane.

We had a pleasant chat recently with Dr. Joseph P. Christopher. In collaboration with Father Charles E. Spence, of St. Gregory's, Cincinnati, Dr. Christopher prepared the new English translation of the Raccolta (Benziger Edition). Dr. Christopher is hard at work now on the translation of prayers for a Breviary which Msgr. Stedman is preparing to publish soon in four volumes—Latin on one page, English on the other.

Msgr. Stedman will make the work available at the lowest possible cost, although his press run will hardly be able to reach the fabulous figure attained by his little Missal. But it will be a real joy, having a translation at hand when we run across a verse like: *Rex Virtutum dilecti dilecti: et speciei domus dividere spolia*—or, *Si dormiatis inter medios cleros, pennae columbae deargentatae, et posteriora dorsi ejus in pallore auri.*

We spoke with Msgr. Sted-

man himself on the 'phone. He is preoccupied now with spreading a knowledge of the New Testament. He wants to build his "Daily Reading" into a text, large size for use in classrooms, small size for study clubs and home usage. We'll probably have more to say about this later, too.

One-World-Willkie (Lord rest him) should have been at Old St. Mary's recently. A visitor arrived in the morning who nonchalantly announced that he'd just stepped off the plane from West Africa. That night we introduced him to another visitor who had recently arrived from East Africa. We felt in a kind of vague way that Mrs. Roosevelt should have been there to add the final global touch.

As you know, *Keys of the Kingdom* has finally been released. Some priests thought it would never reach the public or at least not in a recognizable form. Msgr. John J. McClafferty, national head of the Legion of Decency thinks Father Parsons who acted as adviser turned out an excellent job, all things considered. While the picture at first sight might seem dubious in spots, practically every ill-sounding passage is susceptible of an orthodox interpretation. Father Parsons put in hard work and many hours of consultation before he was finished, and he kept many other errors and dogmatic blunders out of the picture.

A nice problem with the Legion is the question of dogmatic censorship. As they now interpret their mandate from the Bishops, their censorship covers only matters of decency. But should an out-and-out heretical picture turn up—what then?

As long as the Legion confine themselves to moral matters, they have the cooperation of non-Catholics in large numbers; but should they go on to censorship of ideologies, they would certainly lose that support and perhaps provoke an outcry on the part of Hollywood and the secular press.

Their present method is to classify the picture according to decency and then raise a flag beside the title of the picture in question, referring to a footnote which says that the film contains matter objectionable or questionable from the standpoint of Catholic dogma.

We noticed a favorable review of *Keys* in the January *Sign*. A somewhat more philosophical approach is offered by Father Sullivan in *America* (Jan. 6, 1945). The tendency towards religious films should be encouraged, he points out, and viewed sympathetically. One should be critical but not captious (these are not his very words). His warning against what he calls "immoderate perfectionism" is based on the

danger he sees of arresting "a movement which is enormously promising for good: It has been no small achievement to get the film industry to make these excursions on the side of the angels. We must convince them that it is worth their while to make more."

As if the Legion of Decency were not enough, Msgr. McClafferty also takes care of Catholic broadcasts for C.B.S. and M.B.S., arranging for speakers, forwarding mail, etc. Our Church is on C.B.C. every fourth Sunday from 10:30 to 11:00 E.W.T. The difference is caused by the fact that C.B.S. has two 30-minute religious broadcasts each Sunday, while M.B.S. has only one. We get one-fourth of the total time on each network. (The National Council of Catholic Men handles Catholic broadcasts for N.B.C. and Blue.)

We had breakfast with Pittsburgh's Father Thomas F. Coakley during the holidays. If you ever pass through the Smoky City, don't fail to visit his Sacred Heart Church. Ask him to show you the new enameled doors on the tabernacle in his Blessed Sacrament Chapel. They are superb! — took craftsmen three years to complete. And then ask him to show you the last sculptured panel in his sanctuary. He has his own interpretation of its significance —and it is not in the guide-book.

We have asked him to write an article for us on his method of financing his annual budget. It will be good when it appears— if he'll write it for us.

The first article of our first issue certainly made the headlines, i.e., Bishop Noll's study of Catholic strength in the major cities of the country. It first went out through the N.C.W.C. News Service and was featured pretty generally in the Catholic press, drawing front-page headlines in the national edition of *The Register*. Then *The New York Times* copied it, as well as *Time*, the national news-weekly, both of them crediting *The Boston Pilot* as the source of the information.

The first issue of *The Priest* went to more than 9,000 subscribers. A monthly bundle of 50 copies has been ordered by the Fathers and students of St. Mary's Seminary, Baltimore. Several seminary directors sent subscriptions for all of their students. Circulation of this issue will near 10,000. We hope our work will justify these tributes.

Our apology for late delivery of the January number. It was half our fault, half Uncle Sam's —or Frank Walker's. Printing was held up to avoid the Christmas mail tie-ups, but we got into them anyway, and learned, to our regret, some subscribers did not receive their copies until January 10. Sorry, but it won't happen again.—R.G.

Lay Leaders and Leading Laymen

There lies ahead a glorious opportunity

Rev. John S. Kennedy

LAST month I ventured the opinion that there lies ahead for the Church in this country a glorious opportunity. The enemies of Catholicism take such a statement to mean that the Church will have an excellent chance to seize political power, overtly or covertly, directly or indirectly. They assume that political power is the one, or at least the chief thing in which the Church is interested. Nothing could be more fantastically untrue; political power contributes nothing to the Church's proper function. On the other hand, there are Catholics who interpret a prediction of this kind as meaning that the Church will enjoy vast material prosperity and command the external respect of all and sundry by reason of the formidable number and aggressiveness of her members. But this is only ostensible, superficial success, not at all what the Church was designed to achieve—or wants.

If We Do Our Part

The real opportunity ahead for the Church consists in this: that there will be hundreds of thousands, to put it conservatively, who, if we do our part, will be ready to listen attentively to the Church's voice, to consider her unchanging but ever-pertinent message, to embrace joyfully the Faith of which she is the custodian, to become Catholics.

This is a splendid prospect, not because it will make the Church a bigger organization, but because it will bring more and more to the well of living water. It is obvious that the accession of many converts will work a change in the world. I do not mean a shift in the statistics of religious affiliation, but a moral change and a social change in the sense that the supernaturally-rooted Catholic doctrine bearing on the conduct of human affairs will have more practitioners and exemplars. Perhaps I should state this conditionally: i.e., that it *could* work such a change, for the actual effecting of a change would necessarily depend on Catholics' spirituality and their understanding, acceptance, practice, and propagation of the social principles stemming from our Faith. Experience shows that Catholics may be surprisingly naturalistic in thought and action. However, the inevitable disillusionment with materialism in all its forms and guises will sharpen appreciation of the spiritual and the moral, and occasion a determined effort to

make these count heavily in the "practical" realm if only as the sole means of saving society from the exclusive alternatives: anarchy or slavery.

We Need Lay Leaders

American Catholicism must be ready to meet its opportunity. This brings us to a point of cardinal importance: the need of lay leaders.

More and more the priest realizes the indispensability of lay auxiliaries in the work of the Church. These are now required in the propagation of the Faith and the permeation of society with the spirit of Christ and the all-transforming grace of God. Their role will be far greater in the near future. True, there are certain things which only the priest can do. But, especially in present and imminent circumstances, there are, and will be, things which the priest simply cannot do, alone or at all. These devolve on the laity.

The Popes have seen this and have repeatedly insisted on it. Pope Pius XI and Pope Pius XII each stressed it in his very first encyclical and returned to it later. Nor have the Popes stopped short with a statement of the fact; they have gone on to define the apostolate of the laity and to indicate in detail how it should be conducted.

The priest, concerned as he is to find and to utilize lay leaders who will be a kind of extension of himself in his unique office, must, before he seeks them, much less uses them, know just what lay leaders, as the Popes use the term, are. He must, at the outset, make, and consistently thereafter observe, a distinction between lay leaders and leading laymen, and it is with this distinction that the present article attempts to deal.

What He Is

What a lay leader is may be gathered from Pope Pius XI's definition of the purpose of the apostolate of the laity (Encyclical *Firmissimam Constantiam*, 1937): the "sanctification of souls" and "the building up of the Body of Christ." "To this end," he wrote, "are to be subordinated every social and economic work and charitable undertaking." If this work "were set aside in favor of another extrinsic work of whatsoever species, even if it were a case of defending necessary religious and civil liberty, it would be a sad mistake." The apostolate of the laity, he added, "does not spring from any mere natural impulse to action," but "is the outward actualization of solid interior formation; it is the uncontrollable overflowing of intense love for Jesus Christ and for souls."

A lay leader, then, is, above all, a spiritually-minded, supernaturally-orientated, and genuinely holy person. He must have qualities of intelligence, enterprise, tenacity, and persuasive-

ness, but, primarily, it is sanctity, the living of the life of grace in all its fullness, that is required. *Not every holy person is a lay leader; but every lay leader must be a holy person.* Here is the priest's standard for choosing, and he must apply it well. We see at once that the criterion of lay leadership which many of us have used in the past is altogether inapt. We have sought the cooperation not of lay leaders as the Popes use the expressions, but of leading laymen.

The Leading Layman

A leading layman, as contrasted with a lay leader, is a man who has won a position of prominence in the community—in politics, the professions, etc.—and who is a Catholic. His being a Catholic has nothing, or, at best, very little, to do with his being a leader. He is a leader in a wholly secular field.

One certainly does not belittle the achievements of such a conspicuous layman. One is gratified by, and proud of, them so long as they are legitimate and legitimately brought off. To have Catholics make their mark in, say, government or law or medicine or industry or trade, is an excellent thing. But one cannot simply assume that their faith, their sanctity, their zeal, their service of Catholicism are proportionate to their prominence. They could be, but are not necessarily. Each case must be individually examined and judged. Moreover, in these despiritualized, schizophrenic days many people, Catholics included, regard religion as not only private but irrelevant to the "practical" side of life. Hence one cannot take it for granted either that, in reaching the top, the prominent Catholic has done nothing, in his business or profession, at variance with the natural law and positive Christian moral teaching or that the world has not, in greater or less degree, taken him over. In short, a well-known and influential Catholic is not always or automatically a representative Catholic. He may be a leader, yet not a Catholic leader.

Could Do—Not Does

We commonly suppose that he is, that the Catholic notable is a notable Catholic, and treat him as such. If he is of blameless life, if he neither conceals nor scants nor disgraces his religion, unquestionably it is proper to show him the regard to which his position entitles him. Christianity is no respecter of persons; no more does it condemn the man of proven merit in any field. It gives him his due. But no more. Now this is quite a different thing from ranking material accomplishment above virtue and conferring quasi-royal honors on Mayor A or Bank President B, while barely speaking to Mr. C or Mrs. D, plain people whose sole claim on our respect is the negligible consideration that they are what

Our Blessed Lord called the salt of the earth.

It is sometimes argued that the Catholic notable must be deferentially used because of "what he could do for the Church." The subjunctive mood is, for once, well used here. Even from the sheerly opportunistic point of view, "could do" is right, not "does." What actually *does* he do and what real need has the Church of what he *could* do?

That "could do" exemplifies the tendency to equate the Church with a big business or a mere social organization, on the level of other businesses and organizations and consequently using the same methods as these, playing the same angles, and requiring and prizing the same political and fiscal "contacts." It goes without saying that the Church is, in one sense, a human organization. It is not a disembodied thing, a secret, invisible, wholly spiritual entity. It has its physical side, its physical wants and problems. There are institutions to be run, property to be bought, mortgages to be placed, money to be handled, and all the rest. There are the conditions for the proper functioning of the Church to be secured. All of which is obvious and right.

But it is quite different from making this the be-all of Catholicism or even the principal part of Catholicism and allowing it to impose worldly prudence as the sovereign rule in our choice of leaders. The Church's power and prestige are from within, are primarily spiritual. To these the Catholic notable can contribute nothing more than any other Catholic; indeed, he can and does contribute far less than the unknown and uninfluential notable Catholic. Therefore to assume that he is of necessity a lay leader, and the very model of one, is erroneous to the point of being calamitous. He may very well be not at all the kind of lay leader which the Church must have in order to accomplish its true end, the salvation of souls and the leavening of society to facilitate the salvation of souls.

The Thorough Catholic

Your real lay leader may be quite obscure in the community. He may be a man of little or no means and of sketchy education. His name may not be on the grand list, indeed it may never appear in the papers at all save at his birth, his marriage, and his death and then not in the least prominently placed. He may never be an honorary bearer, that least measure of distinction which most men attain at one time or another. In the world's estimation, he may be just an also-ran.

But he is a Catholic and he is a leader. His Catholicism is not accidental, shallow or spasmodically operative. It is not an

icing. He is a thorough Catholic, one whose whole life is dyed with Catholicism, whose mind, outlook, judgments are Catholic. He is not a fanatic or a bigot, but he has the Catholic mentality, the Catholic scale of values, the Catholic perspective. He relates everything to Christ, views everything in the light of Christ. He sees the connection between his Faith and every facet of life. He may not be very articulate about all this, but it is there and discernible.

He is interested in the spread of the Faith, in the welfare of the Church, in the application of Catholicism to social and personal problems. This supreme good which he happily possesses, he wants to share. He believes in the efficacy of undiluted Catholicism as the basic specific for the ills of society and he is eager to put it to work where it will do the most good.

Furthermore, he fulfills a requirement on which Pius XI insisted: namely, that the lay leader be subject to the authority of his ordained superiors, that his undertakings be not independent in conception and execution. Our man reverences his priests and bishop. He sees them with the eyes of faith. He is not blind. He knows their faults and failings as well as the hostile critic. But for him the crucial thing is their sacramental character—their being priests.

This is his attitude toward every priest. In this he differs sharply from many of the leading laymen. The latter are likely to be quite realistic, as they think, in their appraisal of priests, considering them as professional ecclesiastics rather than as men of God set apart and dignified by ordination, regardless of their personal qualities. They are likely to patronize priests, to find fault with the running of the Church from the business point of view, and to draw up their own plans for "Catholic Action" as if it were a campaign to sell more electric flatirons at a bigger profit and drive competitors to the wall.

The Specifications

It is no excuse for us to say that the truly holy people are not leaders, when our mental picture of a leader may be a brash and loquacious fellow who has a way of making people buy a useless encyclopedia or elect a cretin to a responsible and lucrative public office. These are not the specifications of Catholic leadership laid down by the Pope, the first of which specifications comprises prayer, sacrifice, and unquenchable zeal. It is to his specifications that we must adhere. We must find persons of the sort which he requires and then begin the process of training them for the work.

Pope Pius XI wrote to the Mexican Bishops: "The methods of an effective collaboration of the laity with your action

will never be lacking if the priests will devote themselves with careful attention to cultivating the Christian people by means of wise spiritual direction and careful religious instructions . . . You . . . should care first of all for the supernatural formation of your leaders . . . The salvation of Mexico, as of all human society, lies above all in the eternal and immutable evangelical doctrine and in the sincere practice of Christian morals." Here is our directive. Let us conform to it.

Prayer for Priests

The following beautiful prayer was written by His Excellency, the Most Rev. Richard J. Cushing, Archbishop of Boston. We are happy to help make it known to the priests of America. Additional copies may be secured by writing to the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, 49 Franklin St., Boston 10, Mass.

O Almighty Eternal God, look upon the face of Thy Son, and for love of Him Who is the eternal High-priest, have pity on Thy priests. Remember, O most compassionate God, that they are but weak and frail human beings. Stir up in them the grace of their vocation which is in them by the imposition of the Bishop's hands. Keep them close to Thee, lest the enemy prevail against them, so that they may never do anything in the slightest degree unworthy of their sublime vocation.

O Jesus, I pray Thee for Thy faithful and fervent priests; for Thy unfaithful and tepid priests; for Thy priests laboring at home or abroad in distant mission fields; for Thy tempted priests; for Thy lonely and desolate priests; for Thy young priests; for Thy dying priests; for the souls of Thy priests in purgatory.

But above all I commend to Thee the priests dearest to me; the priest who baptized me; the priests who absolved me from my sins; the priests at whose Masses I assisted and who gave me Thy Body and Blood in Holy Communion; the priests who taught and instructed me or helped me and encouraged me; all the priests to whom I am indebted in any other way, particularly ..... O Jesus, keep them all, close to Thy heart, and bless them abundantly in time and in eternity.

Those nations on their backs would do well to get on their knees.—**Archbishop John Glennon.**

Further Thoughts on Parish Social Action

Work of vital importance can and must be done

Rev. John F. Cronin, S.S.

IN an earlier article, it was suggested that there is a field of social action for every parish priest. To most of us, it is the apostolate of the worker, *as a worker*. That means a consistent effort to know the working man and to learn of his problems as they occur in factory, mine or shipyard. This knowledge does not follow of necessity from our normal parish contacts, although it is easily superimposed upon such duties. Such is the timidity of the average worker, and such his fear of rebuff, that we must go to him and sympathetically ferret out the scores of problems which mean so much to him in his daily life.

The reward of these activities is the full confidence of the laborer. They mean that he will listen to the priest, rather than to the plausible agitator. Today, let us face the facts frankly, he does not listen to the priest in matters other than religion in the strict and narrow sense of the word. To our fathers, the priest was friend and counsellor in every walk of life. But the modern man is educated both formally and through the newspapers, radio, and motion pictures. He does not have the simple trust of yesterday's faithful. Unless we win him back by new and positive efforts, America may well drift towards the European condition, where workers take their politics from socialists and communists and their religion, if any, from the Church. Bad as that state is, it is but a preliminary to open irreligion and anti-clericalism of the type that saddened Italy and France before the First World War, and Spain during the Thirties.

The Special Apostolate

These are the reasons why the *general apostolate* of the worker, mentioned in the earlier article, is vitally necessary. But to some of us, there is something further, a *special apostolate* of social action. This is a distinct calling. Just as some priests also become teachers, or preachers of missions, or editors, so it is to be expected that some will be inclined towards this new ministry. It is quite important that this work be recognized as a normal, though specialized, activity on the part of diocesan and religious priests. On the one hand, there should be no temptation to dismiss it as a fad or a peculiar hobby. It is an application of the virtues of justice and charity in a very important field. It has a place, just as the position of the promoter of clean movies and

decent magazines has his place in applying the Christian virtues of modesty and chastity. On the other hand, no priest should feel apologetic because temperamentally he does not find himself called to this work. St. Paul insisted that God has given us a variety of talents and a consequent variety of callings.

Usually there is no difficulty in discerning whether or not one is fitted for this work. This writer has taught many brilliant students who were to become most zealous priests, but whose calling was not for the social apostolate. They recognized in their hearts the importance of the work, but felt no attraction whatever to it. Others seem to take naturally to social action. They are at home with workers and employers, talk their language with ease, and enjoy the contacts and problems. If there are six such priests in a small diocese, and a dozen or two in a large one, an immense mission could be accomplished.

Requirements

Pope Pius XI gave three characteristics which are needed for the work: a passion for social justice and social charity; prudence; and courage. The delicate amalgam of justice and charity gives sympathy for the oppressed. It leads to a strong reaction against evil, coupled with an understanding of human frailty. It permits positive action in favor of the weak and helpless, without infringing upon the impartiality which is the soul of justice.

Justice

Justice is not easy to achieve in a field where feelings run high and where self-interest leads to deceit. Often the truth is not easily found. The simple approach is that of the partisan. This leads to a certain specious consistency: we are always popular with the group we favor. But it is a popularity which is hollow and dangerous. It is based on the fact that we can be used; and people rarely respect those whom they victimize. This applies to both capital and labor. Business men are glad when the clergy echo the current propaganda line of the press and radio, but mingled with that feeling is a certain contempt for our gullibility. Likewise, labor leaders welcome the "labor priest," but their respect lessens if we take the attitude, "labor, right or wrong."

In the complex field of social action, justice is more than a wish or an attitude. It takes hard, intelligent work to get at the facts of the case. To the superficial observer, it may seem that most priests who get into the field are partisan and pro-labor. Yet, it may well be that justice dictates precisely such a course in the circumstances. The so-called impartiality which avoids taking any stand and which bestows praise and blame equally in all circumstances may be a travesty upon justice. The

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real test of impartiality is the opinion of informed observers. The fact that so many priests have been called upon to act as arbitrators and have been appointed to the position of public members of the various War Labor Boards seems to indicate that they are considered really impartial by those whose interests are at stake.

Prudence

Justice must be applied with prudence. Prudence is as hard to define as good taste. It is something which one either possesses or lacks; it can be learned only to a limited degree. In the social field, it means preoccupation not merely with *what* you do, but *how* you do it. It is not timidity, although it may dictate circumspection and a policy of caution and moderation. It involves no sacrifice of principle, yet it may temper the wind to the shorn lamb. Usually a priest with wide enough experience to know the whole field, and the charity and delicacy which avoids inflicting unnecessary pain, will naturally take the path of prudence.

Unfortunately, it not infrequently happens that a strong sense of justice is conjoined with a relative lack of prudence. The result often is a series of incidents which bring doubt and suspicion upon the entire Catholic social program. Accordingly, it is a good rule for a young priest beginning in this field to seek advice from more experienced and prudent counsellors. This may slow the pace of action, but it will lead to more extensive achievement in time. There is hardly a diocese which does not have its case histories of zealous priests whose potentialities for good were blighted by premature and precipitate action. Naturally, if a young priest can get advice from one who has had extensive experience in the field of social action, so much the better. But one ironclad rule should be this: if a priest has a reputation for hasty and intemperate action, he should never accept a position of leadership and responsibility in the social field. He may do excellent work in a subordinate position, but his should not be the responsibility of making decisions and initiating action.

Courage Indispensable

The final virtue of courage, or fortitude, is indispensable. It is no accident that the great apostles of social justice were men of indomitable courage. The very features of a Von Ketteler or a Pius XI reveal this. With all the prudence in the world, there are still bound to be discouraging hours and days and months. Disillusionment and cynicism is often the lot of the reformer who lacks religion. The world is full of tired and soured liberals. It takes principle and strength to carry on when human rewards seem few, and when those who should help us seem indifferent or even hostile.

It is a shock when we are betrayed by those whom we are striving to help. It is true that betrayal is rare and exceptional, but the dull weight of apathy becomes a galling burden in time.

Success in the social field demands that we be sure of our course. We must be, in the sense that the saints used the word, indifferent to results. It is no field for the merely ambitious or the climber. There are easier paths to the purple or to the mitre. We must be prepared, in all prudence, obedience, and deference, to stand against the world when we are right and it is wrong. One zealous priest put it aptly: You need the hide of a rhinoceros in this game. A yes-man does not last long at it. Nor does the sensitive soul who takes criticism in a personal manner. To succeed one must be a man of God, with emphasis on both nouns. The very attractive virtue implied in the phrase "a sense of humor" is indispensable in this work.

Get The Facts

Qualities of heart must be reinforced by attainments of the mind. Two things above all are necessary: sound principles, and awareness of current facts. It would be a great boon if we were able to recommend a single book which had all this information neatly catalogued, but unfortunately such a book does not yet exist.* As a starter, it would be well to write to the N.C.W.C. in Washington and the Paulist Press in New York for a list of their pamphlets. The papal encyclicals, the Social Action Series, and other pamphlets are good to start with. Of the encyclicals, it might be best to begin with *Atheistic Communism* of Pius XI. This is a clear, orderly presentation of positive Catholic social teaching, in addition to a condemnation of communism. Once this is read, *Rerum Novarum* and *Quadragesimo Anno* in the new N.C.W.C. translations would be next on the list. Then the pamphlet commentaries.

For current events, the *New York Times* is by far the best newspaper. The best Catholic labor paper is the *Wage-Earner* of Detroit, with the *Labor Leader* of New York and *Work* of Chicago also good. *Social Action Notes for Priests,* by Father George Higgins, of the N.C.W.C. is indispensable. For general labor news, the weekly newspaper *Labor* is fair and balanced. The *Commonweal* and *America* both have considerable material in the way of commentary on social problems, with *America* favored. This recommendation is given even though the writer

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*Our Sunday Visitor's symposium on "The Modern Social and Economic Order," to which, incidentally, Father Cronin is a contributor, is one of the best in this field. It presents 19 chapters by as many authors, all recognized specialists in their fields. O.S.V. Press, $1.00. (Ed.)

is highly dubious of their wisdom and correctness in apparently whitewashing PAC during the recent campaign. In the same vein of thought, it must be confessed that *Time* and *Fortune* are fair and objective in handling social problems, much as we may dislike other aspects of their editorial policy.

Consistent reading of the sources just indicated, plus a great deal of contact with day by day problems, will keep a priest reasonably informed on current facts and policies. On this basis, he will be able to do well in a number of the fields to be described in subsequent articles. He will not have the assurance which comes with specialized training. He will not always have the data necessary to form independent opinions. But he can do excellent work both on parish and diocesan lines.

Priests' Study Clubs

In many dioceses, priests have banded together for further training through study clubs. Some have used this writer's textbook, *Economics and Society* (American Book Company). To such groups, it is suggested that they await the new edition which should appear this summer. It will have a much more extensive treatment of Catholic social teaching and more up-to-date bibliographies.

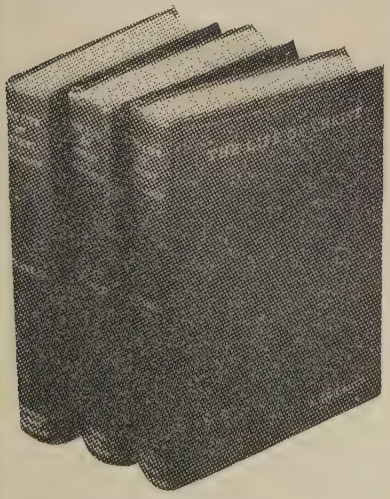
In addition, there should be more opportunities for formal training and consultation. Many of these will have to await the conclusion of the war and the return of the chaplains. But if priests get started now along the lines suggested, they will be ready and anxious for these opportunities when they become available. After the war, for example, there should be a resumption of priests' labor schools in the various dioceses, giving a short "eye-opener" course to a large number of priests in every diocese. Likewise after the war, and even now, when they can be spared, every diocese could send a small number of priests to the Institute of Catholic Social Studies at the Catholic University for the six weeks' summer school course. Finally, the one or two men who may want to make social action a life work in their diocese could come either to the Catholic University or the Institute of Social Studies at St. Louis for even more intensive training.

In facing the future, a priest should not be downed by that old maxim: "The best is the enemy of the good." Only a few will become Ph.D.'s in economics or related fields. Of these, fewer still will attain to the pre-eminent positions of Monsignor Ryan or Bishop Haas. But this does not belie the fact that work of vital importance can and must be done on parish and diocesan levels. Indeed, if we were compelled to take the choice between national figures with no effective

diocesan and parochial action, and intense local activity with no outstanding national leaders, the latter would be the preferable alternative. The unreal dilemma is not meant to belittle the apostolic work of these brave pioneers; it is used to indicate the aggregate impact of thousands of parish priests working close to the people. The parish is the heart of the Church. Upon its vigor depends the health of the whole organism.

The labor publications recommended in this article cost $1.00 a year each. They can be obtained by writing directly to the **Wage Earner**, 338 State Street, Detroit 26; **Labor**, 10 Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, D. C.; **The Labor Leader**, 226 Lafayette Street, New York 12, and **Work**, 3 East Chicago Avenue, Chicago 11; Public Affairs Pamphlets, Rockefeller Center, New York City, are the best secular pamphlets on social subjects. See also Rev. R. A. McGowan, "Annotated Summary of Quadragesimo Anno" (Van Antwerp Library, 1234 Washington Blvd., Detroit 26, Mich.)

I say in truth that ignorance in priests is more to be feared than sin, because by it we do not ruin ourselves alone but dishonor and degrade the priesthood. I beseech you then to give yourself seriously to study. Knowledge is the eighth sacrament in the ecclesiastical hierarchy.—St. Francis de Sales.



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Our enemies have slanders cut to fit all classes

"ALTHOUGH I know very little of theology, I admire the Catholic sense of continuity and of tradition. It strikes me that Catholic priests possess two rare qualities: dignity and contentment . . . Now I come to the questions I would like to ask. They are not theological questions, for I am not qualified to probe into theology any more than a child can analyze Einstein. I want to know:

"Why, although your leader, the Pope, deplores racial prejudice and organized greed, does your Church tolerate these evils in such overwhelmingly Catholic countries as Spain and Argentina—the racism chiefly in anti-Semitic Spain and the greed in feudal Argentina? . . .

"Why does predominantly Catholic Ireland refuse to join the United Nations in the war against the Axis? . . .

"Why did Catholic bishops and archbishops order the church bells to ring out when Hitler entered Vienna? And in France, the devoutly Catholic Petain, Weygand, and Gamelin capitulated to Hitler, while anti-clericals like de Gaulle refused to lay down their arms . . .

"The germ of my question boils down to this: Is there some deep underlying sympathy between Catholicism and reaction? Is the Roman Catholic fundamentally undemocratic and retrogressive? In the United States, for instance, why have Catholics opposed the direct election of senators (back in 1910), birth control, the child labor amendment, freedom of the press and of the cinema, secular education? Why do Catholic spokesmen take advantage of America's distaste for Communism by labeling progressive social legislation (the child labor amendment) and progressive institutions Communist?"

That is only a short quotation from a three-page letter, single-spaced, which was received at a Catholic Information Center in the West.

The Same Old Stuff . . .

It would tempt one to believe that non-Catholic objections to the Faith have gone high-brow, but it is only one phase of the attack. This gentleman—and he writes with sincerity—is following the line of *The Protestant*, a monthly magazine edited by Kenneth Leslie. This publication caters to intellectual bigots; it sings Communist tunes, ignores the Soviet attitude toward religion, and brands everything critical of or even apathetic to the U.S.S.R. as fascist.

Another letter reveals a varied

assortment of the more familiar brand:

"Does the Catholic Church still approve of the 'Syllabus Errorum', issued by Pius IX in 1864 . . . ? Is it still heretical to believe that the Church should be separated from the State?

"Has the Inquisition, or the burning of unbelievers at the stake, which bathed all Europe in blood, ever been condemned by any of the infallible Popes?

"Pius XII called the recently threatened destruction of Rome a criminal attack. Is it not true that the last time Rome was shelled it was on behalf of Pius IX, if not at his behest, by French troops capturing it for him (circa 1870)?

This gentleman is kind enough to let us know that he has been reading Bob Ingersoll, Tom Paine, and two books called *Roman Catholicism Analyzed* and *144 Bible Contradictions.*

His objections have at least the merit of being literate. An aura of plausibility attaches to them so that they might be painfully embarrassing to the average layman.

The Catholic Information Society in New York receives many indignant letters from what might be called Bible-Christians. Perhaps it is true, as Chesterton says in his *Orthodoxy,* that their numbers are dwindling, but those who remain are certainly very articulate. We get more letters from them than from any other type of Protestant. Only last week we had a hand-duplicated sheet, listing 20 Catholic beliefs or practices which, it was alleged, were without Scriptural warrant (prayers for the dead, worship in "unknown tongue," prayers to Mary, baptism of bells, holy water, etc.)

In a class with such circulars, we lump those viciously anti-Catholic tracts still going the rounds in large numbers, which make gross accusations against the morality of the Catholic clergy and sisterhoods. One such dodger announced a fresh printing of Foxes' *Book of Martyrs,* a classic in scurrility, which has defamed the Church through three centuries.

Together with *The Protestant,* mention should have been made of *Signs of the Times,* a Seventh Day Adventist weekly, published in Mountain View, California. Its circulation runs into the hundreds of thousands. It takes many a slap at the Catholic Church and, earlier this year, it ran a series of articles alleging our suppression of Bible-reading. The series bore an appearance of scholarship, was illustrated, had copious footnotes. Typographically, *Signs of the Times* looks very attractive.

Also, there is *The Converted Catholic,* a monthly, edited in New York by apostate priests. (On the masthead: *Et tu aliquando conversus confirma fratres tuos,* or, rather, the English translation!) So far it is just a little thing, cheaply gotten up

and poorly printed, but there are at least two doctors of divinity on the staff, and should the magazine be taken up and promoted by anti-Catholic capital, it could become extremely damaging.

Slanders Cut To Fit

Taking the anti-Catholic campaign as a whole, it remains substantially what it has always been: a highly diversified appeal to every type of intelligence. The more intellectual people are served a diet of objections drawn from history, philosophy, and sociology, through the pages of *The Protestant, The Nation,* with occasional assistance from *Time, News-Week,* and even *The Atlantic Monthly;* the deeply religious and evangelical Protestant element is nourished on objections to "Mariolatry," the sacraments, and the sacramentals; while the lowest stratum gets along on the thrills and chills of the Inquisition, the cloister, and whatever horrors occur to the twisted minds of those who provide ammunition for the attack.

It is safe to predict that in time a concentrated effort will be made to foster anti-clericalism, as we have seen it in the Latin countries of Europe. That was the tenor of at least one notable speech delivered at a Communist convention in Mexico last spring.

How can we most effectively fight our enemy? By prayer, mortification, good example, and by drowning the country in a torrent of Catholic information.

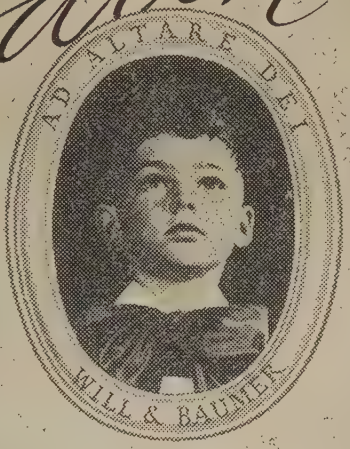
We have the little Catholic Information Articles for the secular newspapers, thank God!—and their use is spreading. (The Catholic Information Society of New York publishes its own series independently of the National Council of Catholic Men.)

There is *Our Sunday Visitor* with its weekly circulation of 665,000 (when really it should run into the millions!)—the only national periodical with an apologetic slant, containing not news but catechetics—explanations of our dogma, moral, and cult.

And there is the pamphlet and leaflet addressed directly to the non-Catholics, as distinguished from the type which seeks to develop the piety of the Catholic reader. The pamphlet for the non-Catholic is short and sweet, attractively written, and printed, most appealingly, as cheaply as possible. It is sold to Catholics, clergy and laity, *to be given away.* It is not meant primarily to be re-sold at a profit, hence is not built for the pamphlet-rack, so to speak, unless the faithful have first been educated to its purpose.

The non-Catholic layman finds this pamphlet disappointing, naturally, since it tells him in simple language, for instance, that the Pope is not anti-Christ, or that nuns do not wear strait-jackets —which the Catholic knew all along . . . It must be pointed out to him that he is to stand treat for his non-Catholic brother. He will buy the pamphlet to leave in

"Faith



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the bus, on his way home; or in the lavatory at work; in the cafeteria; any place where it will be read.

Something of this sort is done, for instance, by the Rev. Charles P. Bechler of St. Aloysius' Church in Cleveland. He talks up the "pamphlet of the week" at all his Sunday Masses and then has Boy Scouts posted as salesmen at the doors.

Father Bechler's slogan is "A Pamphlet Library in Every Home." It gets results!—an average distribution of 500 each week. If this practice were followed in other parishes, our weekly distribution would run into the millions. Even if we moved only 100 pamphlets per parish each Sunday, we would get a 1,300,000 weekly distribution which would total 67,600,000 annually—or half the population of the United States. In fact we would reach more than half the population because the pamphlets would be passed along.

Training Is Necessary

It is a matter of education, for one is not naturally apostolic. There is such a thing as selfishness—the me-first attitude—even in religion. The writer has seen Catholics plunge unerringly through a forest of information leaflets on the rack to get at booklets on stigmatists, apparitions, indulgences, novenas and other such matters more or less concerned with personal piety.

A retreat director in one large city ordered thousands of our leaflets for his high school retreatants. Later it was reported to us that they had been a vast disappointment. They had not *sold*. But, you see, if the retreat master could not finance their outright donation to the students, he should first have instructed them on their responsibility to their non-Catholic neighbor, and then he might have suggested an offering of three cents per item, or whatever the individual could afford.

In the past four years we have developed a catalogue of pamphlets and two-page leaflets on more than fifty phases of the Catholic Creed. Because our work is done at a low cost without the sacrifice of style and appeal, we have been told that our line is ideal for free distribution on public racks in bus-terminals, railroad stations, hotels, etc. During the past four years, we have distributed more than 4,000,000 items.

At times the work is discouraging and we feel that we are trying to flavor the ocean with a spoonful of vanilla extract. Our one comfort is the fact that the Holy Ghost is not with the enemy. He is on our side—and He is a mighty powerful Ally!

Genuine humility is stamped with the nobility of truth; it is not only perfectly compatible with magnanimity, but it is even inseparable from it.—**Cardinal Gibbons.**

Going Which Way?

Excerpts from an unpublished autobiography

Rev. Charles E. Bermingham

"GOING My Way" with all its wholesome entertainment has rendered a disservice to parish life in this country. It will be many a year before some of the lessons taught by Bing Crosby and Barry Fitzgerald are unraveled from the minds and hearts of priests and people. The writer is concerned principally with one concept, one grain of cockle sown with the wheat which may affect a generation of priests if not pointed out in time.

There is no doubt that a whole regiment of seminarians are secretly planning to work with Catholic youth in scores of dioceses and hundreds of parishes on the Bing Crosby pattern. They may even have begun to develop their voice and solicit a jacket from a big league baseball club to implement their future apostolate! Naturally they expect, and may not be disappointed in some cases, to find themselves working under a pastor of the Father Fitzgibbons type. All of this bodes trouble for the priestly youth workers of the future, and it is high time that a rough sketch be drawn of the average priest working in that sphere of his ministry which is concerned with recreational and social activities.

Since this article began on a critical note, it will attempt to block out a proper concept of the priest director of parish social and recreational activities by presenting vignettes which convey the same impression as the "Going My Way" curate. Inasmuch as modern advertising sells hand lotions, jet-propelled razors, and gadgets for sanctuary lamps on a negative note—you-don't-want-to-be-like-that, so buy-this,—it may well be that the presentation in serio-comic fashion of several known types of youth leaders will formulate a more basic understanding of what the ideal looks like.

Type 1. The Don Bosco Complex

The materials for these sketches were gathered in large measure from an unwritten autobiography. Passing quickly over those chapters entitled, "the canon lawyer," "the preacher," "the writer," and "the builder," the author came to that section entitled "A Second Don Bosco." Here was recorded the fanciful dreams, enthusiastic projects and the bruised and painful experiences of yester-year. Moreover, this source material has been enriched by observation of other good men and true, classmates, seniors and juniors who are or were zealous in the work for youth. Naturally, any re-

semblance to persons living or dead must be denied.

Released like a horse from an electric starting gate, the new curate rushes from the seminary to his first assignment to do all and conquer all for youth. Despite the few restrictions imposed by the pastor, the new curate knows in his heart that he is destined to be the strong and fervent saviour of youth. He is confirmed in this opinion as he is given in quick succession the altar boys, the Boy Scouts, the Confraternity Class, and the Junior Sodality. The senior curate, recognizing his power of absorption, willingly turns over most of his share of the youth program. The children themselves instantly note his power of leadership, his winning smile, his "at your service" mein. His athletic prowess furnish juvenile table-talk for the whole parish. Even parents are grateful and enthusiastic. Great things are hoped for and expected.

If you ask the new curate during those first few months what secret technique he employs, he will tell you frankly that it resolves itself into personal contact. He is too humble to admit, although he may feel it, that grace, strength and spiritual growth are emanated by his presence in the school yard, the parish hall, and the classroom. While he rejected the title, he was not at all displeased to have the senior curate dub him "the king of the kids."

Alas, summer gave way to fall, and fall to winter. The curate began to experience the test of time. The one-man youth movement began to be slightly dizzy and a little hurt. The altar boys continued to snatch each other's surplice and miss appointments even after the boat ride and friendly talks of the moderator. The Sodality, after its first increase in attendance, began to fall off. The girls complained that the meetings were dull. Our public school children were not so constant as they should be in attendance at Confraternity classes. And the boys in the school yard had reduced themselves to a chosen few—mostly those who were not able to make the team at the park. Dark doubt has entered the mind of the young priest—perhaps youth work is not the soul-satisfying, interesting, and zestful activity it seemed to be.

Type 2. The Great Athlete

The great athlete is an apostle of youth but in a specialized field. From his seminary days, he has been convinced that athletics is a boy's salvation. He read somewhere a stirring motto: "A bat, a ball, and God" and being a literalist he took it at its face value. He formulated an ideal which contained the best elements of Rockne, Connie Mack, and Father O'Malley, alias Bing Crosby. His tools of the

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trade contained not only books on canon law, dogma, and moral, but also a college jacket (preferably Notre Dame), a well-used baseball glove, a football, and a pair of spiked shoes.

Applying the principle "divide and conquer," his plan consists of dividing the youth population of the parish into boys and girls, and then the boys into athletes and non-athletes. Since his particular apostolate is to the red-blooded American boy, he soon indicates to the pastor and others that he will specialize in the athletic type. Every group and society of which the great athlete is moderator produces a team according to the season. The 8th grade boys, the choir, the junior Holy Name, and unattached athletes, Catholic and non-Catholic, in the parish or outside of it, are molded to the great athlete's program for two-fisted boys.

The athlete's program is simple both in theory and practice. The emphasis is on athletics. The athletic boy is the soul of the youth problem, the one who needs a priest most, and the one who really should be saved. There is a close correlation between muscle and character. Athletics develop the virtues of charity and justice (at least most of the time). Athletics and purity are closely related (except in the case of a few prominent boxers, baseball players, tennis champs, etc.) The priest on the football field, in the pitcher's box, and in the swimming pool is a continual source of inspiration to the boys. Even the girls and non-athletes are edified by the amount of time, energy, and money which Father Athlete spends with the two score boys who are the soul of the Youth Apostolate.

Naturally problems arise, individual and collective, pastoral, parental and school, but there are compensations beyond measure. There is the feeling of well-being after a touch tackle game, in which the athlete did most of the passing, the youthful praise in having struck out Junior Murphy, age 12, and the shiny trophy presented by the park commission to the moderator of St. John's big team, most of whose members were parishioners and amateurs.

Type 3. The Culturist

This priest will agree with me thoroughly concerning Father "Going My Way" O'Malley. However, he is sincerely convinced that the Church must do something for youth and is more than willing to take his part in this mission. His formula is based upon certain convictions which are, in turn, based upon certain personal limitations. In order to understand youth, he has examined closely the trends and interests of his own high school and college days. The athletes at one time admired, have achieved little success, no Ph.D.'s, no outstanding leaders; mere salesmen or bank clerks

struggling to support wife and family. Dancing bored him in those days and the dancing crowd are even more pitiful than the athletes. Moreover, he remembers an old priest who once said that in his boyhood there were no activities for youth in his parish and yet the parish produced 14 priests and 23 sisters, including four cloistered nuns.

The culturist, like the athlete, decides to specialize in a field in which the greatest good can be done. The present social and recreational activities of youth are for the most part fill-ins and fodder. The activities and societies which the pastor has imposed upon him must reduce such interests to a minimum. Their membership must be impressed with the cultural and the elevating. He will bring over his album of operas for a music appreciation hour. He will give lectures at the meetings on timely topics—Church and State, modern books, etc. Serious speakers will be introduced to discuss national and international movements. Finally the entire membership will resolve themselves into one or more study clubs or discussion groups, using as references the Summa (English version), Christopher Dawson's works, and other approved and recommended authors.

For some reason or other, the wheels don't go round in this program. Father Culture cannot interest a high percentage of the working girls in the Sodality in Newman, Chesterton and Belloc. He frowned when someone asked about a book on trees in Brooklyn and even the Prefect giggled. With some bitterness, he complained to his fellow curates on the general intellectual level of the high school boys and girls of the parish. Even the Catholic college graduates were found devoid of serious thought and cultural tendencies. Convinced that his goodwill had fallen on barren ground, he continues in a prefunctory way to administer his part of the parish youth program, while secretly hoping that some day he may be moved to a parish where the cultural level is higher and his proper concept of leisure activity more appreciated.

Miscellaneous

There are other Father O'Malleys who likewise impress one as being slightly off center or oval shaped in the treatment of social and recreational activities in the parish. Many of these are specialists who believe one activity, or one type of organization, is the simple solution to the whole problem. Others are slightly near-sighted, inasmuch as only one sex or one age group is encompassed in their vision.

The "McNamara's Band" type, affected as a child at the St. Patrick's Day Parade, rushes to organize a parish drum corps or band intended to grow to limitless proportion. Any youth able

to hold two sticks or blow a horn is invited and entreated to join the noise which is heard half way into the next parish. Pastoral pride is appealed to so that our band is bigger, louder, flashier, and has more majorettes than that of any other parish in the Holy Name Parade. Money, time, and eardrums are no object to the man who loves a parade.

"He-who-does-it-all" is the Indian name of a type who suffers a nervous breakdown or heart affliction before his 10th anniversary. No youth or adult in the parish wants to or is able to do the jobs connected with the various social and recreational activities or organizations. Father decorates the hall. Father hires the band. Father selects the uniform. Father coaches the team. Father moves the stage props. Father is sometimes discouraged and tired.

Moderators of adult groups, such as the Holy Name Society and the Rosary Society, include the type called "The Entertainer." He believes that some social activity should be connected with societies, both as a bait for membership and an insurance of their vitality. The form of this social activity is good straight entertainment—varied and spectacular. He has a number of joke books in his library and jots down other jokes suitable for telling at the meetings. He is entertainer Number One. However, he realizes that others must be included and, consequently, tenors, jugglers, violin players, baseball pitchers, and people with moving pictures are enticed to the monthly meetings. Even cooling drinks are solicited and distributed to bring out the crowd.

"The Builder and Decorator" type is the man who is handy with the nail, the hammer, or a piece of electric wire. His main contribution to the youth program and the social activities of the parish is his tool chest and the local hardware store. A little hazy on what to do with the youth or why, he is strong on adding a light here, fixing a door, and constructing anything from a boxing-ring to a coffee counter.

Finally, we have the antithesis of all others. The type whose motto is, "it isn't needed here." He is usually found in the parish where the steaks are thicker, the trees are shadier, and the mink coats more numerous. The parish plant is completed and paid for. Masses on Sunday are crowded. Reception of the sacraments is recorded in the tens of thousands. The beautiful school is filled with children and the register of the religious societies is large. The whole situation bubbles with optimism and well being. Nothing remains to be done. Is it any wonder that Father O'Malley on the right side of town can say, "We need no social or recreational activities. This is not the Barbary Coast.

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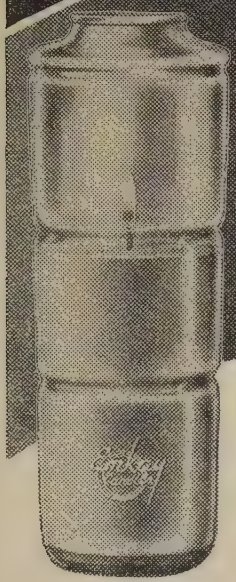

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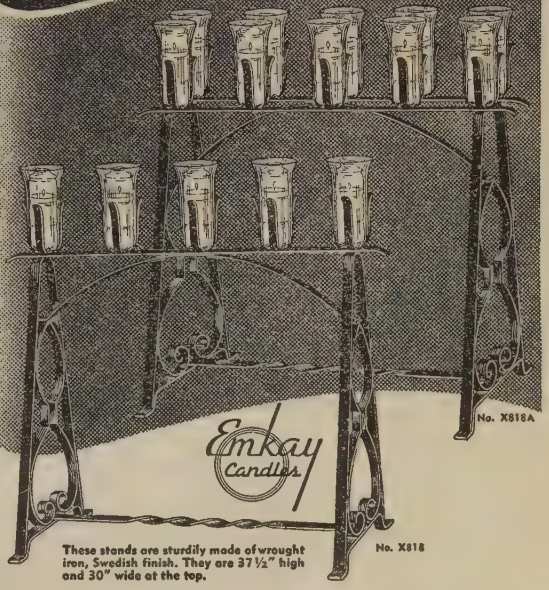

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However, it is disconcerting to hold the opinion that Scouting is not needed and yet to find forty or fifty per cent of the membership in local Protestant church troops your young parishioners. It makes one uneasy and a little annoyed to find that not a few of the older boys and girls have joined the young people's club in the neighboring parish. It is a rather hollow compliment to have the broad-minded minister in a local church comment favorably on the fine young people of your parish attending his weekly dances. Such a well-served parish with such nice people seems to maintain a better than average rate of mixed marriages and problem boys and girls, and a small but flourishing group of places known in these better neighborhoods as cocktail lounges which are sometimes patronized too long and too well by the younger set.

We Keep Trying

The closet door has been open and a few butterflies or moths are embarrassingly exposed. This does not mean that the closet is filled with butterflies and moth eaten garments. The Father O'Malleys of America have met the need of American youth and conditions in which they live in an admirable manner. No need to record the zeal, the effort and the understanding which has been demonstrated by so many priestly leaders.

However, there is some place for pointing out our weaknesses and insufficiencies. Even authors of meditation books promote virtue by exposing defects. Consequently, this essay, using poor Father O'Malley as a spring-board, has attempted to point out some unfavorable characteristics in our work with parish social and recreational activities, particularly those of youth. Sometimes and many times we lack objectivity, deliberation and foresight in the field described. We acknowledge the need of preparation for good teaching, preaching, or building a wing on a school. We work at these things. We study the needs of those served. We plan carefully our methods. We examine and utilize fully our resources. We check and recheck results. For that reason our job is quite successful. By that same application and use of method, our job (not our recreation) with the activities and societies of our parish could be immeasurably improved and their results made more productive and lasting.

What is Archimedes moving the world, to the humblest Christian moving heaven by prayer.—**G. H. Miles.**

Questions in Moral Theology

Answers to our readers' inquiries

Rev. P. J. Lydon, D.D.

I. Rhythm

QUESTION — I heard three priests discussing the morality of the exclusive use of the sterile period in marriage when the plan is followed regularly by mutual consent. One said that it was a mortal sin; another that it was a venial sin; and the third that it was no sin at all.

What is the correct doctrine on this question?

Answer—1. Since 1929-1930 the studies made by Dr. Knaus in Prague and Dr. Ogino in Japan have disproved the theory found in books published before that time. Doctors Capellmann and Pfluger taught that ovulation and menstruation coincided. This view is now antiquated. The Jews used the Knaus-Ogino method "in reverse" (Leviticus XV). Hence they had large families.

2) It seems to be proved that the new information on the days of possible fecundation and the days when conception cannot occur is scientifically accurate. The biological law has been discovered. But the application of the law is difficult in practice because of the varying length of the menstrual period in women. Other causes also, of an emotional character, may spoil the calculations of the couple (will they resort to abortion?). Hence there is in practice no absolute certainty. In any case, an up-to-date physician must be consulted in using this Ogino-Knaus discovery. When the confessor is allowed to suggest its use in a particular case, he cannot give assurance of absolute certainty to the penitent.

No moralist calls intercourse per se sinful during the sterile period, even when selected on purpose. The act is natural and there are secondary ends to marriage which are realized. It depends on the intention of the parties and on the circumstances. There is no "abuse of a faculty," which Pope Pius XI in his Encyclical "Casti Connubii" (1930) brands as "intrinsically evil and a grave sin." The Holy Father says also that in this statement "the Church speaks through Our mouth." The Anglican Bishops by a vote of 193 to 67 allowed, however, an artificial method of birth-prevention "when the parties think conscientiously that they can use it." But these same Anglican Bishops spoke strongly against abortion. Some wit said that this amounts to the assertion: "You may steal and cheat, if your Christian conscience approves, but for heaven's sake don't cut a man's throat!"

3) All moralists would condemn as grave the exclusive use of the sterile period when it is

not a truly free agreement on both sides. If not free, an injustice per se grave is done to the other spouse who is not honestly willing, and who has a right to conjugal relations. It would, of course, also be grave if there exists proximate danger of incontinence or of unfaithfulness to marriage vows. This danger is not imaginary in many cases.

4) Theologians, however, admit that there are at times solid reasons to justify the couple in using the Ogino-Knaus theory. These reasons may be permanent or only temporary—e.g., poverty, poor health of the mother (real, not pretended), frequent still births, necessity of "spacing" births because of the extraordinary fecundity of the wife—in a word solid and honest reasons for avoiding births at this time or at any time. It may be cautiously suggested as the lesser of two evils to an incorrigible onanist (S. Paenitentiaria, June 16, 1880).

5) Assuming that there is free consent on both sides and no special danger of incontinence, but that the couple have no good and honorable reason for avoiding children except selfishness and the desire to be more free to enjoy a career, to avoid sacrifices, etc., and that the practice of Rhythm extends over many years, theological opinion is divided as to the gravity of the sin. Some call it per se a mortal sin; others a venial sin. This attitude of studied selfishness, the life of childlessness with the other evil results cannot, however, be called a sinless habit. The question was submitted to five eminent moralists in Europe in 1936 and all condemned the practice as sinful except for a good cause. *(Ecclesiastical Review,* June, 1936 pp. 587-593). The dissertation "The Morality of Periodic Continence" by Griese (Catholic University, 1942) —now published by the Newman Book Shop, is a clear and practical study of all the various aspects of the subject. The author of the thesis, with some other theologians, considers the long-continued practice per se grave without grave cause. Good faith, of course, may exist.

Some of the evil results of the practice without good cause are: It manifests undue selfishness; it ignores the fact that procreation is the primary objective purpose of marriage; it involves either the total absence of children or only one or two which, we know, is dangerous to the happiness of married life. The couple who are childless tend to drift apart. A normal wife feels unhappy and cheated of her right without the blessing of offspring. Many live to regret their past practices. The imprudent advertising of this method causes the advocates of contraception to say that "Catholic birth-control" does not really differ from theirs (it does, essentially). People in general are not theologians. The Catholic

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ideal of fecund marriage is lowered. The faithful are scandalized when these couples receive the Sacraments regularly. Why no children? Marriage is chiefly for the good of society. Where is the sacrifice without which marriage is a failure? Is not grace given in marriage to enable the parties to shoulder burdens? When the couple are selfish there is likely to be a shirking of other duties of religion. The clergy should not blindly publish and encourage this method.

The Bishops of several countries have spoken against the growing publication of this new knowledge and its application by some of their flocks. The Bishops of Belgium (Fifth Provincial Council of Malines, 1937) decreed:

> "Such a manner of using the marriage right, followed without a very serious reason during all, or almost all of the married life, is opposed to the plan of Providence concerning the propagation of the human race, represents a serious attack on the honor of marriage and particularly on the dignity of the wife, and creates grave dangers for married people."

II. The Purpose of Marriage

In recent years some Catholic authors have sought to change the traditional doctrine (Canon 1013) that the primary objective end of marriage is the procreation and education of children and that the secondary end is subordinate to the primary. These writers, e.g., Dr. Doms of Breslau, saw a difference between the *meaning* and the *purpose* of marrige (the personalist idea of marriage). There is no real distinction.

The Supreme Congregation of the Holy Office with the approval of the Holy Father, on April 1, 1944, issued a decree in which this new theory is rejected and the correct teaching is reaffirmed —namely: that the primary end or purpose of the marriage contract in the law of nature is the procreation and education of offspring and that the secondary end is essentially subordinate to the primary, and not coordinate with, and independent of, the primary purpose.

From this, of course, it follows that the sexual act must be natural and per se suitable for generation. Any other act would be intrinsically evil. (A.A. S. (1944) 103; see *Theological Studies*, Sept. 1942 pp. 333-374 article by J. C. Ford, S.J.). Only loose thinking would sanction contraception because of the failure to see that satisfaction of passion must be obtained modo naturali.

Question in Canon Law

Question—Is the Code a book of new laws?

Answer—The Code contains a great deal of older legislation; it modifies somewhat certain laws and finally it introduces some new legislation. The new work of codification became oper-

ative on Pentecost Sunday, May 19th, 1918. This is an important date because the Code made changes, for example, in some of the diriment impediments to marriage. Compare disparity of worship before 1918 and the present form of the impediment. Also, consanguinity, affinity, public propriety, spiritual relationship, age . . .

—Examples—

John, a baptized heretic, married Julia, non-baptized, in 1916. The marriage is null. If it had taken place since May 19, 1918, it would be per se a valid marriage, although not a Sacrament.

Peter was a sponsor for Mary in Confirmation and married her without dispensation in 1917. The marriage was null. It would be valid if contracted since the Code became law. No impediment comes from sponsorship in Confirmation now.

Thomas, a Catholic, married his third cousin in 1916 without dispensation. It was null then, but the impediment extends only to second cousins at present.

Did these pre-Code marriages automatically become valid after the Code became law? No, they must be validated by renewal of consent or by sanatio in radice. If they are ignorant of the nullity the sanatio is the proper procedure.

Question—What effect has the Code on the legislation of our Baltimore Councils?

Answer—The matter found in the Councils of Baltimore consists of some Roman indults, some laws that are not opposed to the Code, and other laws that are in opposition to the law of the Code.

By virtue of Canon 6 No. 1° all Church laws whether universal or particular opposed to the Code are abolished unless the New Code expressly allows some laws made by inferior legislators to stand even though contrary to the Code—which is rare. By force of this principle the Baltimore law, e.g., on the appointment of an administrator of a vacant diocese is abrogated. Also the law on the number and appointment of consultors, implicit incardination, the method of re-

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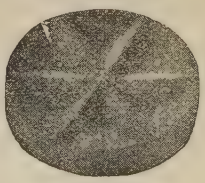
Self-  Lite
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moving pastors, etc. There are, however, fifty regulations found in the Baltimore Councils which are still in force. Barrett—A Comparitive Study of the Councils of Baltimore and the Code of Canon Law. C. U. Washington, 1932.

Question—Does ignorance of the law excuse from the legal effects?

Answer—Invincible ignorance of the law excuses from formal sin, but not from the effect of incapacitating and nullifying laws (Canon 16). Hence if a couple, even in good faith, marry with a diriment impediment, the marriage is null. If a pastor, for instance, resigns his parish orally before the Bishop alone and not in writing or before two witnesses, the act is null (C. 186). There must be proof in case of dispute later and the Code makes the act null for this reason. No law is invalidating or incapacitating unless the law expressly or equivalently so declares (Canon 11).

The Code uses expressions such as "ut valide agat," "ad validitatem," "irrita est" etc. These clearly show nullity. Calling an impediment diriment is to make it invalidating equivalently. Compare Canon 1095 on Validity with Canon 1097 on lawfulness. A couple who are really free to marry come into your parish from another parish and you assist at the marriage without investigation and permission. The marriage is valid inside the boundaries of your parish, but gravely sinful under the circumstances. If you as pastor went outside your parish and had no express delegation, your act would be null. Your ordinary powers for valid assistance are confined to your territory (Canon 1095). If you go to another parish you must be expressly delegated by the local Ordinary or the pastor of the parish or you must be sub-delegated by the assistant of that parish who possesses general delegation (Commission of Interpretation, Dec. 28, 1927— c. 1096).

Question—Who explains a law finally?

Answer—The Commission of Interpretation alone gives the final and universally binding meaning of the Canons of the Code (Papal Commission). A particular decision of the Roman Rota on the marriage of NN and NN binds these persons, but it is not universal (Canon 17.) The Commission of Interpretation publishes its answers in the Acta Apostolicae Sedis (A.A.S.).

Question—But, in practice, how can I know whether I may do this or that in every day life?

Answer—In practice, we follow the teaching of sound Canonists until the Holy See gives the final answer. Probable opinions may be followed. Canonists give the doctrinal interpretation. The Commission gives the public authentic interpretation (the last word).

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Peregrinus Rides Again

Liturgical Neglect of Baptism

V. Rev. Michael Andrew Chapman
Peregrinus Gasolinus

"HAVE you," said the Liturgiologist to the Antiquary, as the two old friends settled themselves for the "evening devotions" after the last convert instructee had departed and the Young Ladies Sodality had fluttered away, "Have you, as a student of more recent ecclesiastical history, given any attention to the neglect of Baptism, not as a Sacrament but as a ceremony, which obtains in this part of the world?"

"Why limit the locale?" smiled the Antiquary. "Hardly anywhere is that great and necessary Sacrament administered with becoming solemnity. I think there are two reasons, one in your 'department' the other in mine."

"I yield to the gentleman from Centerville," said the Liturgiologist, his bifocals flashing in the firelight, "Your 'department' being, I take it, architecture."

"Right you are," and the Antiquary, figuratively mounting the rostrum, began his lecture. "Catholic churches in this country have only within the memory of living men, emerged from the pioneer stage, when a simple shelter to protect altar and congregation from the weather was about all our poor and/but honest ancestors could manage. When we were able to build large (and costly) churches, we had got a long way from the true Catholic tradition, and put up auditoriums, with tiny bay-window sanctuaries, Protestant choir lofts in the rear, no narthex and, therefore, no adequate baptistery."

Lets One Pass

"I pass over, for the moment, your dig about Protestant choir lofts," cut in the Liturgiologist. "Your point, (if you have one) is, I take it, that the ceremonies of Baptism have been neglected because so few churches have a baptistery properly arranged for carrying them out."

"Summarized with your usual acumen," retorted the Liturgiologist. "The little country churches had (and have) no narthex, hardly a vestibule, and the font was, likely as not, up in the front of the church, even, at worst, in the sanctuary. At best, an alcove under the gallery stairs, or a room under a tower which might be called, by a stretch of courtesy, a "separate chapel" as required by the Borromean Instructions. I doubt if there are, even now, a hundred churches in these United States which possess baptisteries entirely conforming to the architectural (to say nothing of the liturgical) requirements."

"May it not be," asked the Liturgiologist, with suspicious mildness, "that the American custom of having the Priests' House adjacent to the church has something to do with the curtailment of the narthex, in which, if I remember rightly, a good deal of parish business was transacted in ages past?"

"You may be right," retorted the Antiquary. "I hate to admit it, but you sometimes are! More probably the curtailment was due to economic pressure. Anyhow, the tiny vestibule replaced the spacious narthex, and the baptistery was crowded out, or rather, IN. Nothing can be plainer, from ancient architectural arrangements, as well as the directions in the Roman Ritual, than that the baptistery should be regarded as a place, a chapel, at least a railed-off locality, not properly IN the church, tho adjacent thereto and opening thereinto!"

"Five dollar words he uses," laughed the Liturgiologist. "I have to agree with you, of course, on account of the two little processions which are probably part of the ceremonies of Baptism, tho seldom observed among us."

"That's only one reason for urging the proper architectural design of the Baptistery," went on the Antiquary. "I'll not go into the fine point that the Font should be DOWN steps rather than up (to signify the Pauline 'burial with Christ') but the size and design of the Font itself comes into the picture. Modern American baptismal fonts are real—hardly more than Holy Water stoups, with a septum. Indeed, a careful examination of Benstets catalogues (prewar vintage) discloses the fact that just such duplication of design is startlingly prevalent. No one need cavil at Holy Water 'fonts' at the entrances of the church, tho a more Catholic tradition prefers the bracket-shaped 'stoup' set into the wall, but the Baptismal Font should, in the very nature of things, be a much larger and, ut ita dicam, more ornate piece of ecclesiastical furniture, not a casual basin on a pedestal in which, sometimes,

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(horribile dictu) the baptismal water is not reserved at all."

"But it MUST have a cover," interrupted the Liturgiologist, "which can be locked, on account of the consecrated oils mixed with the water; and didn't St. Charles say something about keeping all the Holy Oils in the Font-cover . . . "

"Now! now! Pere!" reproved the Antiquary. "You're trespassing in my field. But you're right again (miracles DO happen!). And the Font-cover can and should be a major ornament of any church. Not an episode, an ornament, in both the architectural and the liturgical sense . . ."

"Who's climbing fences now!" shouted the Liturgiologist. "But, as I've remarked before, if and when you make the arrangements required by the Liturgical Law you can hardly help but have a dignified and beautiful artistic result. There's need of material reform, but I don't agree that the lack of proper architectural surroundings is at the root of the sad decline of propriety in the carrying out of the ceremonies of Baptism. I think, historically and practically, it was just the other way around. Our more or less primitive forebears, all of them for decades in a missionary country and missionary circumstances, financially and otherwise, had to 'make do' with what they had. And the quasi-private circumstances made that all the easier. Sunday afternoon became the accepted time, the small group of interested people, none of them eager for publicity, the difficulty of getting altar boys away from the baseball diamond and the swimming hole to serve at a ceremony which could so easily be performed without their 'assistance': these things conspired, along with other considerations into which we'll not intrude at the moment, to deprive what the books call 'Solemn Baptism' of nearly all its external solemnity."

"There is something in what you say," returned the Antiquary. "But I still think that properly arranged Baptisteries would of themselves encourage a reform in the direction of a more dignified and liturgically correct administration of the Rite. Meanwhile, there's some excuse for the current curtailments . . . "

"I beg to differ," cut in the Liturgiologist, with the rudeness only an old and proven friendship can excuse, "Do as much as you can, and do it as well as you can, that should be our Liturgical principle always. Too long have we stressed 'validity' as an excuse for sloppiness. The ceremonies of the Catholic Church, especially those with which, through the ages, she had enriched the administration of the Sacraments, are great and important acts, the highest 'manual acts' of which human creatures are capable in their worship of their Creator. Cere-

monies are OUR part of the bestowal of Sacramental Grace. The 'opere operato' is God's part. The Church thinks these outward acts of ours sufficiently important to direct them by rubrics and laws. If she is alma mater to excuse in certain circumstances, is that any reason why we should deliberately manufacture circumstances which excuse?"

"You mean the procession in the administration of Baptism?" queried the Antiquary.

"Yes," said the Liturgiologist, "but heaps of other things too. If the direction to enter the church while the Ingredere is being said, and to enter the Baptistery proper just before the actual Baptism is mitigated to a step or two in each instance, that is, surely, no reason why the whole ceremony should take place in the close proximity of the Font, even in churches where there's plenty of space and plenty of money to set up the proper stage for the presentation of one of the great acts of the drama of redemption. And, since I've mentioned money ("as any good Priest must occasionally," interjected the Antiquary) let me quote the words of no less an 'Approved Author' than O'Kane-on-the-Rubrics ("That his full name?" abnered the Antiquary) and I quote: Baruffaldi justly observes, that there are few churches so poor as not to be able easily to provide the two stoles required for the ceremony, and is very severe on the negligence or parsimony of those pastors who fail to do so. Close quote . . . reopen quote, next paragraph: The present rubric tolerates the use of the same stole during the whole ceremony. In this case it may be either white or violet . . . Baruffaldi seems to deprecate the use of (the) double stole in preference to two distinct stoles; but he does not imply that it is not preferable to a single stole of one color. Close quote!"

"As fine a piece of special pleading as ever I heard," opined the Antiquary. "But the double stole is so firmly entrenched that a Pastor would be considered odd if he insisted on having two stoles for a Baptism. Still, I see your point. Again, we justify a questionable procedure by an appeal to necessity, and then proceed to create the necessity and take advantage of it."

"Quoth the Raven," murmured the Liturgiologist, "Nevermore. Close quoth!"

It is not at all easy to regard the New Testament as a New Testament. It is not at all easy to realize the good news as new. Both for good and evil, familiarity fills us with assumptions and associations; and no man of our civilization, whatever he thinks of our religion, can really read the thing as if he had never heard of it before.—**Chesterton, The Everlasting Man.**

Other Pitfalls

V. Rev. William P. Barr, C.M.

Some more plain speaking

(Continued from January issue)

WE turn now to a consideration of the pitfalls which beset the path of the confessor—not less dangerous than the former—in the discharge of his twofold office of physician and teacher in the tribunal of penance. As a physician of souls, the good confessor will not rest content with merely passing judgment and pronouncing absolution, but will feel called upon to probe into the causes of spiritual maladies in order to apply suitable remedies and antidotes. The discharge of this duty obviously calls for the greatest prudence, and *he* only will escape the pitfalls who has thoroughly understood the true nature and scope of this office and rigorously stays within these just limits.

Physician Of The Soul

With good reason do the "Norms" admonish him that he is a physician of the *soul* and not of the *body*, and that he is never permitted, much less called upon, to supply therapeutic advice to his penitents, especially to his female penitents, or to furnish them with instruction in matters pertaining to sex hygiene. And if anyone be disposed to judge this admonition farfetched or impractical, the writer can assure him on first hand evidence that he would be much mistaken. One example of this abuse, which the Norms undoubtedly contemplate, is that of the director of souls consumed with zeal for the welfare of his penitents, corporal as well as spiritual, who seems to feel that they stand in need of his sympathetic counsel during the trying periods associated with adolescence and late middle-life, and that without his kindly supervision they will hardly survive the perils incident to these physiological crises. Another example is that of the confessor who, directing boys and young men, persists in tracing all temptation against holy purity to the failure on the part of parents to comply with the prescription of the mosaic law for male children and, to make up for this defect, indiscriminately prescribes this remedy for all his male penitents.

Now it may indeed come to pass in the routine discharge of his duty, and of this the Norms take cognizance, that the confessor may discover that his penitent stands in need of medical advice, or he may even be questioned by penitents themselves with respect to the lawfulness of the expediency of certain remedies. In that event he may lawfully, indeed, he might

even be compelled in charity to render his assistance, but that assistance must in all cases be purely indirect. He may refer them to some competent medical man or woman, known to himself to be imbued with Christian principles, but never, under any circumstances whatsoever, is he to play the role of medical advisor in person.

Sex vs "Sexy" Education

Turning now to the consideration of the third office of the director of souls, whether in the confessional or out of the confessional, we are confronted with a problem, much discussed at the present time and one that is exceedingly delicate, namely, the problem of sex-education. The problem may be approached either from the point of view of the priest himself or from that of those whom he is called upon to teach.

Now it would seem to be self-evident that every priest, who has the care of souls, must have acquired a certain measure of sex-education, since without it he could scarcely hope to discharge his duty as confessor without the risk of serious mistakes. But what is the measure of that sex-education and from what sources is it to be acquired? These are indeed very grave questions and I fear that the answer to them in the minds of not a few priests is exceedingly vague. I have already adverted to the danger of ignorance, signalized by the Norms as

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one cause of imprudence in confessors, but there is another danger, to my mind a far greater one, and that is too much knowledge of the wrong kind, drawn from the wrong sources.

In answer to the first question, therefore, I think it may be safely laid down that the measure is to be determined by the exigencies of the office which he is called upon to discharge. In other words what he should have, and what alone he is justified in aspiring after, is a strictly professional knowledge, not a liberal education in matters pertaining to sex. As to the precise limits of this professional knowledge, they can best be determined, so it seems to me, by a consideration of the legitimate sources whence this knowledge is to be derived.

The Natural Law

I say legitimate sources, for no priest is justified in assuming that, just because he is a priest, he may lawfully read anything and everything that falls into his hands or is spoken of in the neo-pagan book-reviews as a thing to be read, provided only it has not been placed nominatim on the Index Expurgatorius. The law of nature itself prohibits one to read without real necessity what is of its nature likely to be a proximate occasion of grave temptation, and the laws of the Index expressly provide that literature which is "ex professo" immoral comes ipso facto under its censure. Nor should anyone delude himself into believing that by any process of rationalization he can think these facts away.

From this it follows definitely that one source from which the priest should not derive his sex-education is the pornographic novel or short story, all too popular at the present time, whether written with the pretense of literary form or frankly catering to the vulgar tastes of the hoi-polloi. The writer is well aware that there are those to be found, alas, even in the ranks of the clergy, who seem to be convinced that no one can make any pretense to culture who is not familiar with the latest works of those authors whose one standard of literary excellence is erotic appeal, and who judge that art can only be achieved by depicting divorce, seduction, and conjugal infidelity.

The writer is also well aware that such works are found on the "must lists" of all of our secular universities and even some of the Catholic universities attended by our good nuns, thus creating a problem for them and a still more serious problem for their religious superiors. But the writer is still old-fashioned enough to believe that the demands of culture are not inconsistent with Christian modesty, and that one need not consider himself untrue to the best traditions of genuine art who refuses to make of his imagination a receptacle for this literary filth. At any rate, he is sure that the

sex-education which a priest might derive from this source would ill fit him to discharge his sacred duty as a teacher whether in the confessional or out of the confessional.

Pseudo-Scientific Sex

Worse even than the erotic novel and short-story, as a source of sex-education for the priest, are those pseudo-scientific treatises, which find their way too often into clerical libraries, bearing such pretentious titles as "What every young man should know" and "What every young woman should know" or "The Art of Marriage" and the like, whose sole purpose, it might seem, is to furnish those who still retain some conscience with a pretext for reading what is nasty. I often wonder what opinion of the clergy the publishers of these filthy volumes must entertain, when they persist in circularizing parish rectories year after year, evidently not without hope of making a few sales.

Finally the writer would absolutely exclude as a source of sex-education the round-table discussion of world experience in the confessional, sometimes real and sometimes, I fancy, wholly imaginary, entered into at times by priests—more frequently, I believe, in the olden days than at present—which can serve no good purpose, but may be in fact the occasion of positive scandal and even lead to a violation of the sigillum.

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Whence then is the priest to derive that measure of sex-education of which he stands in need? Obviously, from the standard works of moral and pastoral theology. And the writer is convinced that anyone who is familiar with the treatment given to these matters by such authors as Noldin, Genicot, Tanquerey, Bucceroni, Lemkuhl or Merkelbach, will be fully equipped to discharge his duty as teacher to the full. Over and above these standard manuals, if one feels the need of a more concrete presentation, there are such approved works as the "Praxis Confessariorum" of Berardi, the "Neo-confessarius Bene Instructus" of Reuter, the "Homo Apostolicus" of St. Alphonsus, not to mention the "Casus Conscientiae" by Lemkuhl, Bucceroni and others.

Other Sources

In addition to these sources, the priest can with profit have recourse to the *Ecclesiastical Review*, the *Homiletic Monthly*, and the *Irish Ecclesiastical Record*, to mention only some of the clerical periodicals which carry articles which may prove very helpful. In this connection, however, the writer feels impelled to express one regret, namely, that, of recent years, there has been a tendency—a very unfortunate tendency, seeing that these reviews fall into the hands of laymen, nuns and non-Catholics—to publish such articles in the vernacular. In the olden days of the *Ecclesiastical Review*, under the editorship of the late Dr. Heuser, the more intimate questions of sex were always discussed in the official language of the Church. Just why this tradition has been abandoned the writer is not able to conjecture. Possibly it may be a rather low opinion which the writers entertain of the ability of their public to understand, or could it be by any chance that the writers themselves are not so familiar as were their academic ancestors with the idiom of the schools?

Negative Role of Confessor

Approaching the question now from the other side, and considering it from the standpoint of the relation which exists between confessor and penitent, we are on perfectly safe ground in affirming that the tribunal of penance was never intended by God to be, nor should it be, suffered by the confessor to degenerate into a school of sex-education. The office of the confessor, in this respect at least, is negative rather than positive, and even in those cases where he may be justified in furnishing constructive advice, that advice must be restricted to that absolute minimum which is necessary to enlighten the penitent concerning the obligations of which he may be ignorant. Moreover it should never be spontaneous, but should spring from the necessity of the confession and should be couched in the fewest possible words.

These Norms specifically warn

the confessor that, under no pretext, shall he rashly presume to instruct the penitent concerning the nature or method of procreation, nor shall he permit himself to be beguiled into this by the curiosity of a penitent who might or might not be in good faith. And in serving this solemn warning, the writer wonders whether the Sacred Congregation did not have in mind those abroad in the land today who have set themselves up as prophets, aye, and apostles, too, of the new technique of achieving birth-control styled the "rhythm"? By this I would not be understood as suggesting that this practice is, under all circumstances, unlawful. Indeed, it would be impossible to sustain any such thesis in view of the explicit teaching of the moralists. For while the technique is indeed new, the principle back of it has been known to the theologians for centuries, and its use has been recommended by them as a last resource in extreme cases. But what I do assert, and what these Norms do condemn, is the temerity of those who recommend this practice indiscriminately, nay, who go so far as to play the role of technical adviser in its use, sometimes with embarrassing results. The writer is personally familiar with one such case, where the confessor, ignoring this wise precaution, administered such technical advice to one of his penitents, with the result that, his technique proving ineffectual,

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his disillusioned client, not without a touch of grim humor, decided to commemorate the fiasco by naming her adventitious offspring for her ghostly father!

Barnyard Sociology

As to the obligation of the pastor of souls to furnish sex-education to the members of his flock—and we speak only of the youthful members—the question is a large one and it bristles with difficulty. In fact it is so large and so difficult, that to attempt anything like an adequate solution of it in the space remaining to us would be futile. But this much is certain: we would be guilty of criminal folly to permit ourselves to be stampeded by the insistent clamors of those neo-pagan pedagogues, whose sociology is of the barnyard and whose educational methods are those of the animal-trainer; stampeded into an abandonment of that traditional conservatism which has characterized Christian education down the centuries.

Contrary to that conservatism would be the introduction into our schools of a program of sex-education such as that visualized by these educators through whose influence it has found its way into many, if not most, of our public schools. On the other hand, we are compelled to recognize that adolescents do stand in need of a certain minimum of instruction in these matters, instruction which in other and better days was furnished in the home, but which, in very many cases at least, will be totally neglected unless it be supplied in the school. But that minimum is very, very small, and it can be taken care of, in my opinion at least, within the compass of three or four instructions, perhaps even fewer.

As to the proper person to impart this instruction, I should say offhand, it would be neither the pastor nor his assistant, and emphatically not the good nuns in our schools. The easiest and best solution, where such a program is deemed expedient,—the solution adopted in some of our Catholic schools at least—would seem to be to invite a competent doctor or nurse, but one certainly known to be thoroughly imbued with sound ethical principles, to undertake this task. And surely it should not be extremely difficult to secure the help of such auxiliaries.

Before concluding, the writer deems it expedient to sound a note of warning lest anyone be led from these Norms, or from the reflections which we have just made upon them, to draw the wholly unwarranted conclusion that henceforth, according to the mind of the Sacred Congregation, confessors are forbidden to interrogate penitents, either to secure sacramental integrity or to ascertain their disposition, and that whenever there is question of sins "contra sextum" or "contra debitum,"

the confessor must rest content with the absolute minimum of generic confession. I say that this inference would be wholly unwarranted, in the first place, because there is not a shred of evidence in the Norms or in these reflections to support it, because moreover it would be directly opposed to the express teaching of all the moral theologians, but above all because this very abuse has been condemned in recent years by His Holiness, Pius XI, who in the "Casti Connubii" beseeches pastors and confessors not to render themselves guilty before God, through their silence, of those heinous crimes which today so gravely threaten the Christian family. I quote the solemn words of adjuration:

"We admonish, therefore, priests who hear confessions, and those who have the care of souls, in virtue of our supreme authority and in our solicitude for the salvation of souls, not to allow the faithful entrusted to them to err regarding this most grave law of God; much more, that they keep themselves immune from such false opinions by refusing to connive at them. If any confessor or pastor of souls, which may God forbid, lead the faithful entrusted to him into these errors or should at least confirm them by approval or guilty silence, let him be mindful of the fact that he must render a strict account to God, the Supreme Judge, for the betrayal of his sacred trust, and let him take to himself the words of Christ: 'They are blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both fall into the pit.'"

True, the task of securing sacramental integrity and of instructing penitents with regard to these delicate matters is not an easy one, nevertheless, since it is a grave obligation imposed by God, it cannot be shirked. And since God never commands what is impossible, the confessor has every reason to be confident that, by making use of the ordinary counsels of human prudence, assisted by the grace of God, he will be able to discharge it successfully.

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OUR Lord tells a parable in tomorrow's gospel about the man who went out to sow his seed. Some fell on the roadway, some on stony ground, and some among thorns and some on good ground. Only that on good ground grew up enough to bring forth fruit. Our souls are surely good ground. The seed has been planted in us. But we must bring forth fruit. We must not only avoid sin but also do good. The Catholic way of life means to do good as well as to avoid evil. Work for others, be kind to others, bear hard things. In this way we shall bring forth fruit.

Before Quinquagesima

A blind man appeals to our Lord in tomorrow's gospel. His cry is: "Lord, that I may see." With Lent beginning next Wednesday, that might well be our prayer too. Lord, that I may see. In this holy period of penance and prayer we should try to see where we offend God, what we can do to stop it, what we should do to make amends, what good things God wants us to do, what hard things He may be asking of us. Lord, that I may see.

Before First Sunday of Lent

Lent began last Wednesday. Perhaps you made some resolutions for particular kinds of penance this Lent, perhaps not. If you did, keep at them. If you didn't, make one or two today—to quit smoking or eating candy or attending shows, to attend Mass daily or to go to evening devotions. And remember a Lenten resolution is not a marathon or a contest. If we break a resolution, it is not dead and gone; we are not put out of any race. We should start over again immediately.

Before Second Sunday of Lent

The Transfiguration of Christ is related in tomorrow's gospel. Peter and James and John went up the mountain with Him and saw His face shine as the sun, His garments white as snow and Moses and Elias talking with Him. They hid their faces at the end of the vision. Jesus told them not to be afraid and they looked up, the gospel says, and saw no one but only Jesus. In Lent we should go up the high mountain with Christ. We climb it through our additional prayers, attendance at church services, our fasting and abstinence. Through our prayers and mortification, our knowledge and love and vision of Christ will be clearer. We shall come nearer to Him so that looking up we shall see no one else but Jesus.

Before Third Sunday of Lent

Our Lord's last statement in

tomorrow's gospel is "Blessed are they who hear the word of God and keep it." We hear the word of God read to us each Sunday. We hear it in sermons. Yet often we let it go in one ear and out the other. We cannot be called blessed for that. If we do not listen more attentively to God's word, we will never keep it. At Mass we stand up for the reading of the gospel out of respect for God's word. Be respectful to it inwardly also. Pay attention to the gospel. Follow it in your daily life. Blessed are they who hear the word of God and keep it.

When the Bishop Comes

On the occasion of an Episcopal Visitation and Confirmation you will note from the Rubrics that the Bishop uses the Holy Water Sprinkler at the entrance of the church before he puts incense in the censer. Since this is a reversal of the customary procedure, you might wonder what the explanation is. The explanation is that the Bishop does not use the censer, but is himself incensed by the pastor, while he does sprinkle the congregation.

In case the Bishop should administer the Sacrament of Confirmation at the Communion rail, he does not genuflect before the main altar as he returns from the right to the left side of the rail to confirm a second and a third row of people. The Bishop does not genuflect, but only bows, because he is wearing the mitre and carrying the Crozier. But this does not mean that the deacon and subdeacon who accompany the Bishop should not genuflect. Too often they do what the Bishop does, namely, make a bow before the tabernacle.

When the pectoral cross is handed to the Bishop, the chain of which is always placed over his shoulders before the stole, the priest kisses the cross on the back, and presents the face of the cross to the Bishop to kiss.

The priest at the right always imposes the mitre, and the priest at the left always takes it off.

The rule governing the use of the mitre is very simple. Whenever the Bishop stands, except to be incensed, the mitre is removed. Whenever he sits, it is worn.

All our troubles, if we seek their origin, proceed from not knowing the use of time.—**Dante, Convito, IV, 2.**

The test of a vocation is the love of the drudgery it involves.—**Logan P. Smith.**

A Priestly Peace Plan

NOT the smallest tragedy of the current war has been the refusal of governments to be guided by the Papal peace pleas. At least part of this respectful but determined disobedience to the Vicar of Christ has been due to a realization by politicians, that even Catholics, *in practice,* regard the tie of nationality or citizenship to be by far the most important norm of conduct in international affairs. Statesmen are aware that however highly Catholics esteem the words of His Holiness, in the last analysis they will act according to the wishes of the Fuehrer, President or Prime Minister of their respective nations.

Priests of the Prince of Peace naturally will wonder how they can prevent their people from ever becoming unjust aggressors. In the judgment of the writer, the Holy Eucharist provides a most effective remedy for exaggerated nationalism.

Each time we place the Sacred Host on the tongue of one of the Faithful we cause him to be united to Jesus Christ in the most loving intimacy. "He that eateth My Flesh and drinketh My Blood, abideth in Me, and I in him," (John 6:57). It is a marvel of God's power that millions of Catholics no matter what their nationality, race, color, or social status, when they partake of the Blessed Sacrament are fully receiving numerically and substantially the same Son of God. If the people are reminded continually of this fact, it will be easy to convince them that a necessary result of the *vertical* union between Christ and the communicant is a *horizontal* union between all who feed on the Bread of Angels.

Here is the basis for the Missal Prayer of St. Thomas before Communion: "O most merciful God, grant me so to receive the Body of Thine Only-begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, which He took of the Virgin Mary, that I may be found worthy to be incorporated into His Mystical Body, and accounted among His members."

When these truths are brought home to the Faithful with the frequency that characterizes appeals for national loyalty, they will surely place the bond of the Blessed Sacrament above every other principle of union. Demagogues will find it impossible to hoodwink good Catholics into movements which sooner or later lead to unjust aggression. For our people will be persuaded that no merely national nor political cause can justify a break in that horizontal union which transcends all earthly lines of distinction . . . Holy Communion. This was the prayer of Our Blessed Lord after He in-

stituted the Sacrament of His love: "That they all may be one, as Thou, Father, in Me, and I in Thee." (John 17:21)

With such unity among the Catholics of the world, Papal peace programs would have an added sanction. Their surpassing wisdom could not be so easily disregarded by the rulers of nations. Priests can make the Eucharistic Cross of the vertical union with Christ and the horizontal union of the Faithful in Christ symbolize a lasting victory of peace over war.

Rev. Michael J. Deacy
St. Patrick's Cathedral
New York City, N. Y.

It's A Racket

January 12, 1945

Editor,

In view of the nation-wide advertising given to the racket which we expose in the 'Official Note' herewith enclosed, perhaps Your Excellency will be pleased to help us save many prospective victims (especially among Priests and Sisters) by making use of this information in the columns of your publications—*The Priest* and *Our Sunday Visitor.*

It follows:

Diocesan Church Music
Commission
Chancery

(OFFICIAL NOTICE)

Through a number of inquiries addressed to our office from different parts of the United States and Canada we learn that a certain Clifford A. Bennett, now in Pittsburgh, is approaching the Ecclesiastical Authorities of other dioceses for the purpose of arranging Summer Courses on Church Music for Catholic organists and members of Religious Communities. He is also soliciting subscriptions to some kind of Musical Correspondence Course (as a preliminary condition for admittance to the Summer Courses) and is sponsoring the sale of non-authorized Plainchant Records among Seminarians.

Since Mr. C. A. Bennett introduces himself as the Director of the "Gregorian Institute of Pittsburgh" we deem it necessary to state the following facts in order that serious misunderstandings (which are apparent from the letters received) may be eliminated for the benefit of all those concerned as well as for the protection of our well known standards on Church Music.

1. There is no Gregorian Institute in Pittsburgh authorized or sponsored by the Most Reverend Bishop or by any other diocesan authority.
2. Printed pamphlets on Church Music and Liturgy as well as Plainchant Records by the

so-called Gregorian Institute of Pittsburgh are neither approved nor sponsored by the Diocesan Music Commission.

3. Notwithstanding his travelling experience Mr. C. A. Bennett is not duly qualified to teach any particular branch of Catholic Church Music.

4. At the end of his "probation period" as church organist in the diocese of Pittsburgh Mr. Bennett has not been approved by the Diocesan Music Commission for a permanent position here.

5. It is only because of defiance toward the Ecclesiastical Authority that Mr. Bennett still clings to a minor church position in this city.

The Diocesan Music Commission
Rev. C. A. Sanderbeck, Sec'y.

With my best wishes for the success of your newest publication, I am

Rev. C. A. Sanderbeck
125 North Craig Street
Pittsburgh, Pa.

Pro and Con

I have received the first issue of *The Priest,* and I wish to extend to you and your staff my heartiest congratulations for a most commendable job. The work is bound to make a better clergy. It's exactly what the priests needed and I for one will give my full cooperation and support in every way.

"Ad Multos Annos!"
Fr. Anselm Sanniola, O.F.M.

Congratulations for the first volume of *The Priest.* May it have a long life and do much good.

I presume that you are curious as to reader reaction. I have two observations.

1. Would not "slick" paper be better?

2. Must we have ads? If so, why not stick them in the back?

More power to you for an organ that will aid materially the earnest priest.

Rev. Hubert Roberge.

Kindly enter thirty-two subscriptions to *The Priest* for the St. John Cantius Seminary, at one dollar a subscription. That is almost a hundred percent subscription for the seminary; we have thirty-three students of which twenty-three are theologians.

With every best wish for a long and glorious life for *The Priest,* I am,

Rev. John S. Mix, C.R.

To which we can only reply that we are deeply grateful for such whole-hearted cooperation. But we must confess that we are bothered no end by the defection or recalcitrance or whatever of that thirty-third rugged individualist!—Editor

Suggested Subjects and Sermon Jottings

For the month of February — *Rev. John C. Selner, S.S.*

Sexagesima Sunday

February 4

Suggested Subjects from the Epistle (II Cor., XI, 19—XII, 9):

1. The Price of Our Religion (i.e., the efforts of the Apostles and Martyrs to bring it to us).
2. Easy Spread of False Doctrine.
3. Our Interest in the Salvation of Others.
4. Scandal: Its Nature.
5. Fortitude.
6. Folly of Race Exaltation.
7. Co-operation with Actual Grace.
8. The Right Idea of Humility.

Suggested Subjects from the Gospel (Luke VIII, 4-15):

1. The Gift of Faith.
2. Dangers to Faith.
3. Growth in Virtue.
4. Deceiving Ourselves about the Practice of Religion.
5. Worldliness and Its Effect on Belief.
6. Hearers of the Word.
7. Dangers of Moral Relapse.
8. Weakness in Keeping Resolutions.
9. Obstacles to Fervor.
10. No Compromise between the World and Christ.
11. Preoccupation with Pleasure.
12. Spirit of the Gospel.

"Scandal: Its Nature"

Introduction: St. Paul hated scandal: so many instances in the epistles.

Today he is very much upset over the false doctrines being spread in Corinth. His Corinthians are being "taken in" by false teachers. Real scandal!

Main Thought: Scandal is subtle deception, often appearing under the guise of truth and goodness—like the devil himself.

The thing that worried St. Paul was that the Corinthians were *believing* the false doctrines. They were being told to stick to the Jewish law and traditions: that sounded logical to them; they were being deceived, scandalized in the true sense. So scandal is telling people something false in such a way that it sounds true; or advising them to do something bad in such a way that it sounds good. Scandal is different from bad example, though they may happen together. You read of "scandals" in the papers: disgraceful doings which often shock the readers, but seldom scandalize them in the real sense. So scandal is seldom accompanied

with shock. It is far more subtle than that.

The person who is really scandalized is the one who approves of what is said or done. He wants to believe in half truths, or truths misapplied: "Christ is kind and merciful; loves sinners; so there is no hell"; or "a few drinks won't hurt anybody; we have *some* joy in life; God never intended religion to be blue-nosed." Temperance and purity and honesty and piety are not "straight-laced Christianity"; they form part of the routine of Christian life. Real scandal tries to justify sin and verify falsehood; it makes capital of small faults to discredit God and religion: "My idea of religion is to be good to your neighbors and not to be running off to church all the time"; or "Look at that one: going to Communion every week and acting like that!" People hearing remarks of this kind are in danger of agreeing; when they agree, they're scandalized. See how subtle scandal is!

Conclusion: The world is always trying to justify evil and make lies sound like the truth. Some of it sounds logical and so we are deceived: scandalized. Don't believe in the relaxed standards that you find in the newspapers, magazine articles, romances, some movies and a great many stage-plays. Outside of the loose remarks that come in many conversations, the propaganda of the world finds its main source in those channels. Whatever you do, don't be kept out of heaven by lies!

Quinquagesima Sunday

February 11

Suggested Subjects from the Epistle (I Cor., XIII, 1-13):

1. Christianity a Religion of Love.
2. Nature of Love: Union of Minds and Wills.
3. Qualities of Christian Love.
4. Difficulties in the Practice of Charity.
5. Passion and Prejudice: Obstacles to Christian Love.
6. Self-sacrifice in the Practice of Charity.
7. Love of Neighbor: Proof that We Love God.
8. Broadmindedness as an Aid to Charity.

Suggested Subjects from the Gospel (Luke XVIII, 31-43):

1. Christ's Prophecies: Proof of His Divinity.
2. The Scandal of Suffering.
3. Fear of Adversity.
4. Abuse of Grace.
5. Perseverance in Prayer.
6. Gratitude for Favors.

(7. Ash Wednesday: Blessing of the Ashes and Its Meaning).

"Love of Neighbor: Proof that we love God"

Introduction: The Revelation, God is Love, represents the essence of Christ's religion. If God is love, then we must love

our neighbor as St. Paul describes in his epistle; otherwise, as St. John tells us, we have no proof that we love God.

Main Thought: There are many ways of deceiving ourselves about the necessity of loving our neighbor.

One is that we imagine we love him if only we do not wish him harm. You can't use the word love that way. Not if you take St. Paul's description. Another idea is that religion consists in a number of devotional practices; if we attend novenas and say rosaries etc., we are proving that we love God. No doubt these are worthwhile practices, but we have first to think of the great proof of our love of God: love of neighbor. We imagine at times that God does not expect us to love a neighbor who is not loveable; yet our Lord says: What credit is there to you for loving those that love you? Even the pagans do that. No, the real proof of our Christian religion lies in our determination to love all men because God loves them. Difficult to do. But that is what makes it acceptable. Our Lord did not say: "Take up your cross unless you find it difficult." If we would show Him our love we must follow Him, and to follow Him is to pray for our enemies and to do good to those who persecute us. If Christians really believed in this doctrine, there would be tremendous changes in the world. Imagine really *loving* an enemy! You could be put in jail for it these days. But our Lord never gave us a commandment to stay out of jail: *love,* He said.

Sometimes we may not even love our friends in the right way; the right way is to will them good (*velle bonum)* as St. Thomas says. If we give them scandal or encourage them in evil we do not love them. If we put up with their faults just because we hope to get something from them we do not love them. The ideal is to love friends and enemies the way Christ loved them.

Conclusion: Say a decade of your beads today for your worst enemy; pick out one of the qualities of charity mentioned by St. Paul and practice it today; then try another tomorrow. That is real love of God; and God will love you.

First Sunday of Lent

February 18

Suggested Subjects from the Epistle (II Cor., VI, 1-10):

1. Time of Grace.
2. Resolutions for Lent.
3. Delay of Repentance.
4. Spirit of St. Paul's Ministry.
5. Christian Standards Opposed to the World's Standards.

Suggested Subjects from the Gospel (Matt. IV, 1-11):

1. Nature of Temptation.

2. Care of the Body.
3. Presumption.
4. Ambition.
5. Fasting.
6. Humility.

"Nature of Temptation"

Introduction: Imagine our all-perfect Lord submitting to temptation! Why? There was not a human misery He did not go through; we may never say that He doesn't understand.

Main Thought: Temptation is a test of our loyalty.

We are free because God wants us to make a choice: sometimes the choice is between good and evil. Sometimes we are tempted to do what is not so good; other times we are tempted to do what is downright wrong. When we want to do something which pleases us rather than God, we are tempted. But there's never a sin until we *decide* to do what is bad.

Some temptations come from within ourselves; others come from the devil. But the devil is clever. Often he will not tempt us to commit sin, but to do something that will lead to sin. He lied to our Lord as he lies to us. If we put temptation aside immediately, we have proved our loyalty to God. As a matter of fact that's the easiest way to overcome a temptation: act quickly; then forget it! Say NO and mean it. What would you say if some one asked you to take a little poison? Or what would you say if someone told you a little poison is good for you? (Of course it is sometimes, but not the kind that causes death). There is no such thing as a *little* death and there is no such thing —in one sense—as a *little* sin. Venial sins are more easily pardoned, but that doesn't mean they're little. Most of the time we are tempted to do something that will injure our relation with God. The only way to answer that is NO.

Conclusion: Do not worry about temptations. If you fight them you come out better than you were before and God loves you more for it. Just get the habit of saying NO and saying it quickly and you have proved your loyalty. That's why we spend fifty or sixty years on this earth.

Second Sunday of Lent

February 25

Suggested Subjects from the Epistle (I Thess., IV, 1-7):

1. How to Sanctify Ourselves.
2. Christian Ideals.
3. Love of Purity.
4. Honesty.
5. Judgment of God on the Lax and the Easy-going.

Suggested Subjects from the Gospel (Matt. XVII, 1-9):

1. The Glory of Christ.
2. Consolations in God's Service.

3. Contact with God by Prayer.
4. Hearing Christ.
5. Heaven.

"Heaven"

Introduction: The struggle we put up, particularly in Lent, is to gain heaven.

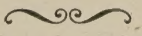
We get a glimpse of it this morning in the story of the Transfiguration.

Main Thought: If we had the right notion of heaven, we'd try for it all the time.

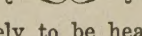
It's because we forget so often. Heaven is everything we want. Perfection. We're always looking for perfection: perfection of life, knowledge, love and beauty. We have only samples of those things on this earth. And what a short time it is! To hear people talk you'd think that yesterday were still here or that next year were tomorrow! The clock keeps ticking off the hours and we think of the earth as real and permanent. The reason we need clocks here is to see how much closer we are to heaven. There used to be a clock in some famous monastery with a Latin inscription on its face. The Latin was eloquent: *Praesens patet; ultima latet!* Roughly translated it meant: You can see the present hour, but the last is hidden. Anyhow, it illustrates the absurdity of thinking there is any permanent joy or love or beauty on this earth. Yet we were made for those things.

Some people think heaven is like a church: You kneel down forever and say prayers or sing hymns or play a harp. That isn't heaven. Heaven for us is God, and God is everything we want or could want. He's all truth, all love, all beauty. A rose has only the beauty of a rose; God has all beauty. Your dearest friend or relative has only a limited amount of love for you, no matter how much you wish they had or think they have. God is Love: all you can want and all you can accept. You love health and energy: God is Life, perfect Life, eternal Life. That is why our Lord speaks of heaven as *living forever.* What a thrill the Apostles must have had when they saw that Vision in this morning's gospel! But it was only for a moment: Poor St. Peter didn't know what he was saying!

Conclusion: Think of heaven a great deal and you will be happy trying for it. Heaven is God, and God is everything!



They who rightly pray, do right; and they who do right, pray rightly.—Bishop John L. Spalding.



The prayer most likely to be heard by God is the prayer that is backed up by works of charity.—St. Leo the Great.

MAGAZINES DISAPPROVED BY THE NATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR DECENT LITERATURE

FEBRUARY, 1945

For the Information of Committees and Dealers, but Not for Publication

CODE FOR CLEAN READING

Periodicals are listed, which:

(1) glorify or condone reprehensible characters or reprehensible acts;
(2) contain material offensively "sexy";
(3) feature illicit love;
(4) carry illustrations indecent or suggestive, or
(5) advertise wares for the prurient-minded.

The following magazines are held to offend against one or more provisions of the above code.

Magazines Still Procurable in Many Places

Army Post
At Ease!
Authentic Detective Cases
Beauty Parade
Booby Trap
Breezy Stories
Buddies
Burlesk
Cartoon Humor
Certified Detective Cases
Confidential Detective Cases
Comedy
Complete Detective
Crack Detective
Current Detective
Cutie
Detective Book
Dizzy Parade
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For Married People Only
Fun
Fun Frolic
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